Christianity:
THE INVITATION STILL STANDS
P.J. STASSEN

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CHRISTIANITY

THE INVITATION STILL STANDS

An Easy Reader for Busy People on the Run

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King James Version (KJV/KJV+) & *Modern King James Version* (MKJV) unless otherwise indicated e.g., *Young's Literal Translation* (YLT) & *Hebraic Roots Bible* (HRB). The reader may find that, occasionally, I have inserted capitals (in brackets) into Scripture references for the purpose of clarity.

2. E-Sword.net: *The Sword of the Lord with an Electronic Edge (Free Bible Study for the PC).* Online 2021.

3. All the sources, scholars, historical figures and authors I have been allowed to mention, quote or use as examples in the course of writing.

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Foreword

An informative book, I believe, should be like a sumptuous dinner … lavish, interesting, easily digestible and to be remembered for years afterwards, and with this book I have aimed to accomplish exactly that, for what could be more interesting and memorable than the persona, life and ministry of a man who has changed the history of the world to the matchless extent that Jesus of Nazareth (the Christ) had done?

Unlike many postmodernists, who have so superficially dismissed the historical Jesus (for all intents and purposes) as nothing more than a deluded first-century religious fanatic and rabble rouser of a charlatan who was arrested by the authorities, not as political zealot or aspiring messiah, but as a common, albeit charismatic public nuisance who disingenuously passed off cheap street magicians' illusions as Biblical quality miracles, i.e., postmodernists who today, like pagan sorcerers and derelict, toothless oriental mystics, dare to determine the measure of a man and his words by (of all things!) the application of coloured beads.

I, instead, insist that only a carpenter-rabbi of His divine origin, moral stature and matchless wisdom could have transformed this 1970s runaway freight-train and weirds-mobile of a cynical, suburban hedonist and amoral agnostic into a person so enamoured with this Messiah that I, in the sunset season of my life, have aspired to write not only one book about His sacred cause and merciful gospel, but several.

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Today, when I read the popular atheists of our times, or debate a seasoned agnostic about the existence of God, I can only heartily agree with the wise theologians who, upon hearing people say that the character of the first-century Jesus of history was so remarkable that He must have been 'forged' (and should be considered a 'fake') instead have so aptly retorted (among others) as follows (my paraphrasing):

"*The man Jesus of Nazareth was so unique, gifted, remarkable and special that only a real Jesus Christ could have forged a Jesus Christ; furthermore, if the Bible really were only a collection of fairy tales, then why is it either banned or severely persecuted in at least 52 countries?*"

PJ Stassen
Centurion, South Africa.
December 2021.

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Introduction

I wrote this book, not as a theologian (which I am not), but as a sinner saved by grace and a social commentator concerned with the cause and future of Christianity in the world.

Part 1. Bible Authority: Introducing the sacrosanct Judeo-Christian tradition of unshakeable, non-negotiable trust in the sacred promises and unfathomable providence of God as presented in the Holy Scriptures as penned over millennia by fallible but devout scribes inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Part 2. Faith: Introducing the prerequisite for Salvation and the blessing of God, i.e*., faith, the substance of things hoped for and evidence of things not seen* without which, as the Bible admonishes, it is impossible to please God.

Part 3. Salvation: Discussing the incomparable message of the idea and gift of Salvation for man, not by virtue of personal merit or an exemplary life but wrought on the cross of Calvary (Golgotha) by the sacrifice, blood, death, resurrection and righteousness of Jesus Christ, Messiah of the Jews and Saviour of the world.

Part 4. Politics: Introducing the principle of the Christian's moral obligation to, depending on temperament and natural or acquired gifts and talents, strive to infuse the murky world of

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politics and society at large with the time-tested Judeo-Christian values of the Bible.

Part 5. Christian Testimony: Sharing some testimonies about the delightful ways and blessings of the Heavenly Father in the Christian's daily walk; His mercies are indeed new every morning.

Part 6. Providence: Introducing the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, not only as the Creator of the world but also as our Heavenly Father and Holy Provider of choice, hence the epithet, 'Jehovah-Jireh': God will provide. As the saying goes, *"Behind a stern countenance, God hides a smiling face."*

Part 7. Judgment. Reminding the world of impending Judgment at the end of the age and man's moral obligation to make his peace with God today while there is still time; tomorrow may be too late.

The story of the Bible and God's designs for man; the Commandments of Moses and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, can, for all intents and purposes, miraculously integrated to be summarised by a single Scripture reference:

> *"For as by <u>one man's</u> disobedience [THE FIRST ADAM] many were made sinners, so by the obedience of <u>One</u> [THE LAST ADAM, JESUS CHRIST] shall many be made righteous."*
>
> [Romans5:19MKJV].

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I am reminded of what C.S. Lewis has said (my paraphrasing):

> *"There are only two kinds of people, i.e., those who say to God, 'Thy will be done!' and those to whom God must say, "Okay then ... have it your way!"*

The lot and final destiny of every (fully informed & evangelised) person that ever lived will, in other words, be decided on this, i.e., a choice between Good and Evil, Light and Darkness, Jesus and Barabbas, Christ and Satan.

With those who object that anyone could exercise such a critical choice still wrongly from pure ignorance, or from cultural and/or religious biases, I can only in sympathy say that I fully concur, and although I insist that there is no other name but the Name of Jesus Christ by which we are saved, we probably should leave such metaphysical judgments (i.e., in respect of the 'inadequately informed and poorly evangelised') for God to decide and deal with.

There is a huge difference between being a 'sinner' and being 'ungodly'/'wicked'. All the 'ungodly' and 'wicked' are sinners, but not all 'sinners' are necessarily 'ungodly or 'wicked' ... they are simply lost and must be found. God has said:

> *"And He [GOD] said, I will make all My goodness pass before you [MOSES], and I will proclaim the name of Jehovah before you. And I will be gracious*

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> *to whom I will be gracious, and will have mercy on whom I will have mercy."*
>
> [Exodus33:10MKJV].

Bon voyage!

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PART ONE:

BIBLE AUTHORITY

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE FOR NON-CHRISTIAN STUDENTS OF THE BIBLE

(Introducing the basic architecture of the Hebrew Bible & New Testament)

1. **The Christian Bible.** The *Christian Bible* comprises two parts, i.e., the *Old Testament* (known as the 'Hebrew Bible' in the Jewish community) and the *New Testament* (the story of Jesus of Nazareth and how Christianity was founded).

The *Old Testament* (comprising 39 books) is often described among Christians as *'Jesus Christ concealed'* and the *New Testament* (comprising 27 books) as *'Jesus Christ revealed'*. The word 'Bible' comes from the Greek, 'Biblos', hence such words as 'Bibliothèque' (French) and 'Biblioteek' (Afrikaans), a library or collection of books. In total what is known as the *Christian Bible thus* comprises 66 (39 +27) books.

Together the historical, cultural and moral influence of the *Hebrew Bible* in the Jewish community (known as 'Judaism') and the influence of the *Christian Bible* ('Christianity') is affectionately referred to as the *Judeo-Christian influence or values.*

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2. **The Old Testament (Hebrew Bible).** The *Old Testament* or *Hebrew Bible* comprises the following books:

2.1 **The Torah or Pentateuch.** Genesis; Exodus; Leviticus, Numbers & Deuteronomy.

2.2 **The Historical Books.** Joshua; Judges, Ruth; 1 & 2 Samuel; 1 & 2 Kings; 1 & 2 Chronicles; Ezra; Nehemiah & Esther.

2.3 **Books of Wisdom.** Job; Psalms; Proverbs; Ecclesiastes; Song of Solomon.

2.4 **The Major Prophets.** Isaiah; Jeremiah; Lamentations of Jeremiah; Ezekiel & Daniel.

2.5 **The Minor Prophets.** Hosea; Joel; Amos; Obadiah; Jonah; Mica; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah; Haggai; Zechariah & Malachi.

3. **The New Testament.** The *New Testament* comprises the following books:

3.1 **The Four Gospels.** Matthew; Mark; Luke & John*.

*John the Beloved, not John the Baptist.

3.2 **Synoptic Gospels.** Matthew, Mark & Luke ('Synoptic', meaning presenting many similarities between these gospels).

3.3 **Acts of the Apostles.** Early Church, Historical.

3.4 **The Epistles (NT Letters from Apostles to Churches).** Romans; 1 & 2 Corinthians; Galatians; Ephesians; Philippians; Colossians; 1 & 2 Thessalonians; 1 & 2 Timothy; Titus; Philemon; Hebrews; James (Jacob); 1 & 2 Peter; 1, 2 & 3 John; Jude.

3.5 **The Book of Revelation.** Apocalyptic, Eschatological.

"The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it ... The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever."

[Psalm68:11; 12:6-7KJV].

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Chapter 2

THE CASE FOR DOCTRINAL INTEGRITY

(Protecting the honour of God's Word)

1. **Proposition #1.** The Bible admonishes Christians to shun 'seducing spirits' or 'doctrines of devils', 'doctrines of men' and 'strange doctrines':

> *"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils'*
> [1Timothy4:1KJV].
> *"Which all are to perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men?"*
> [Colossians2:22KJV].
> *"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."*
> [Hebrews13:9KJV].

2. **Proposition #2.** The Bible warns against those preaching (i) 'another Jesus', (ii) 'another spirit' and/or (iii) 'another gospel' and warns us not to (iv) 'pervert the gospel':

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> *"For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him ... I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ."*
>
> [2Corinthians11:4; Galatians1:6,7KJV].

3. **Proposition #3.** The Apostle Paul took a strong stance against *'preaching' any 'other gospel'.* Bear in mind that Paul has met Christ face to face (on the road to Damascus) and (probably) was the person who was caught up to the 'Third Heaven'; today he is revered as the top authority on first century missions and Christian apologetics. He has said:

> *"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."*
>
> [Galatians1:8KJV].

4. **Proposition #4.** Jesus Christ has made provision for Christians to *differ in opinion* on *peripheral matters* i.r.o. doctrine.

> *"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."*
>
> [Matthew5:19KJV].

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5. **Proposition #5.** Christians should, however, always tread cautiously when interpreting *Biblical prophecy.* Most Christians cherish the idea of the *Second Coming of Jesus Christ* and are well-versed in Scripture pertaining to issues and events surrounding the *Rapture* and the *Second Coming*.

When interpreting prophecy, however, although it may be good and well to make forecasts about prophetic events (and even make mistakes) in terms of the mandate given by Jesus Christ Himself in *Matthew5:19 (for the simple reason that we only 'see-in-part')* but issuing all kinds of guarantees about exact dates i.r.o. certain anticipated prophetic events can be risky.

There is a big difference, for instance, between making a 'forecast' and issuing 'guarantees'. We can, for instance, issue a *guarantee* about the *Second Coming* (and perhaps even forecast a period or an era to look out for) because it is founded on Scripture as corroborated almost daily by the news and world events, although we cannot guarantee an exact date.

We cannot, however, issue all kinds of futuristic guarantees i.r.o. Biblical prophecy, especially in terms of dates and eras. For instance, the four most popular Rapture theories currently in vogue are *(i) the 'Pre-Tribulation Rapture Theory' ('Pre-Trib'); (ii) the 'Mid-Tribulation Rapture Theory' ('Mid-Trib'); (iii) the 'Post-Tribulation Rapture Theory' ('Post-Trib')* and *(iv) the 'No-Tribulation Rapture Theory' ('No-Trib').*

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Bear in mind that to interpret Scripture historically is easy, but once we start issuing guarantees about our own favourite ('pet') *Rapture Theory* we have crossed over from ordinary Scripture exegesis (a right guaranteed & protected by Jesus Himself in Matthew5:19) into the arena of *Biblical prophecy* where the gold standard for accuracy and truthfulness is an absolute 100%.

Do the math: Disregarding for now any theories pertaining to Eschatological studies for the sake of brevity, bear in mind that, of the four *Rapture Theories* currently in vogue *only one* can ever be correct. The other three theories will thus have proponents and followers preaching and teaching incorrect (untruthful and invalid) versions of *Rapture Theory,* thus such possibly catapulting them into the risky category of 'false prophets'. Scripture teaches that God, to put it lightly, takes a dim view of false prophets:

> *"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which*

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> *the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him."*
>
> [Deuteronomy18:18-22KJV].

6. **Proposition #6.** Denying the *Authority of the Father* and *Divinity of Christ* is considered the ultimate dividing line or theological *'Rubicon'* between the *true and the false Gospel.*

> *"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."*
>
> [1John2:22KJV].

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Chapter 3

THE BIBLE IN AFRICA

(Celebrating diversity on the continent where I was born)

1. **Introduction.** According to an Internet source the Bible (in Africa) has already been translated into 29 languages spoken in Africa e.g.:

Afrikaans (South Africa); Amharic; Arabic; Bemba/Cibemba (Zambia); Berber; Chihewa (Malawi/Old Testament); Chope/Tshope (Mozambique); Ciyawo (Malawi); Ge'ez; Olgbo (Nigeria); Isoko (Nigeria); Khoekhoegowab/Damara/Nama (Namibia); Ki-Kamba (Kenya); Konso (Sierra Leone); Luganda (Uganda); Malagasy (Madagascar); Mijikenda/Nyika; Nubian (Old Nubian, Nobiin); Oromo (Ethiopia); Oshindonga (Namibia); Otjiherero (Namibia); Setswana (Botswana, South Africa); Shiyeyi (Botswana, Namibia); Sotho (South Africa); Swahili (Kenya, Tanzania); Xhosa (South Africa); Yao (Malawi); Yoruba (Nigeria); Zulu (South Africa).

2. **The Bible is unique.** The *translatability* of the Bible makes it the most unique book in the world; virtually any person in the world (in the mainstream of society) can these days walk into

a shop and purchase (or order) a Bible in his/her native language. Here's the deal:

> *"The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it."*
> [Psalm68:11KJV].
> *"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."*
> [Isaiah40:8KJV].
> *"For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth."*
> [Psalm33:4KJV].
> *"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."*
> [Matthew4:4KJV].
> *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."*
> [Matthew24:35KJV].

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1. Wikipedia. *Bible Translations into the Languages of Africa.* Online 2021.

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Chapter 4

THE BIBLE: A REFUGE FOR THE SOUL

(Still the only reliable Moral Compass)

1. **A Moral Compass.** The Bible is still a *moral compass* par excellence, the only of its kind in the Cosmos amidst a faithless generation pathologically hellbent on *atheism, agnosticism, violent crime, gangsterism & racketeering, Darwinian Creationism, government & corporate fraud & corruption, secular humanism, Satanism, terrorism, transhumanism and war* etc. The Bible says:

> *"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word ... Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path ... "*
>
> [Psalm119:9,105KJV].
>
> *"For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life ... Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the LORD."*
>
> [Proverbs6:23; 20:10KJV].
>
> *"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,*

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for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

[2Timothy3:15-17KJV].

2. **A Haven of Rest.** The Bible has become a haven rest, i.e., the psalmist's *'green pastures and still waters'* of peace and quiet for many a tempest-tossed soul clamouring for forgiveness, peace, calm, salvation and an everlasting refuge in the Heavenly Father. If I could rewrite the Psalms (which I of course won't) in a more contemporary idiom I would e.g., write:

"The LORD is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in the green pastures of His psalms; He leadeth me beside the still waters of His divine promises."

Be that as it may:

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

[Psalm23:1-6KJV].

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"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler."

[Psalm91:1-4KJV].

"Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High: Therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help. Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses ... I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments."

[Psalm 107:11-13; 119:176KJV].

3. **A Hammer mightier than the hammer of Thor.** God speaks to the Prophet Jeremiah:

"Is not my word like as a fire? Saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"

[Jeremiah23:29KJV].

4. **The Sharpest Sword in the Universe.**

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

[Hebrews4:12KJV].

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5. **The most powerful Book in the Cosmos.** The person who dares to read the *Holy Scriptures* and indefatigably and without ceasing meditate upon the *Word of God* will, over time, be charged with remarkable live-saving faith. Faith comes by the hearing of the Word of God.

> *"But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world ... The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it."*
>
> [Romans10:16-18; Psalm68:11KJV].

6. **The Word of God is Holy Seed.** The Word of God is holy seed that will produce a harvest, and, in Eternity, the Harvest of all harvests in Heaven in saved and redeemed souls.

> *"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."*
>
> [Isaiah55:10-11KJV].

7. **The Word of God is True Wealth.**

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"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times."
[Psalm12:6KJV].

Jesus Christ has promised:

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
[Matthew24:35KJV].

8. **The Word of God is the Brightest and most Luminescent Lamp in the Cosmos.** It will shine even in the darkest hour, with or without heat, as a lamp for our feet and a light for our path.

"For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness ... For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light ... Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path ... Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me."[
[Psalm18:28; 36:9; 119:105,133KJV].
"For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life."
[Proverbs6:23KJV].

9. **The Word of God imparts Wisdom to the Humble.** They say that, when we stop wasting our time chasing the *wrong things,* the *right things* will get a chance to catch up with us.' I have learnt that the Word of God, i.e., wisdom

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from the Throne of God fit for 'human consumption', helps us to stop chasing the wrong things.

> *"Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite."*
>
> [Psalm147:5KJV].
>
> *"With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding ... And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee."*
>
> [Job12:13; 28:28; 42:2KJV].
>
> *"The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes ... Praise ye the LORD: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely. The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names. Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite. The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground."*
>
> [Psalm19:8; 147:1-6KJV].
>
> *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction. ... Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold. For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions."*
>
> [Proverbs1:7; 8:10-12KJV].

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10. **The Word of God bears the Good News of the Heavenly Father's FREE GIFT.**

> *"Therefore as by the offence of one [ADAM] judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one [Jesus] the FREE GIFT came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience [ADAM] many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one [JESUS] shall many be made righteous … For the wages of sin is death; but the GIFT of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*
>
> [Romans5:18,19; 6:23KJV].

11. **The Word of God points the believer to his source of ultimate Power and Support in times of trouble.**

> *"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore."*
>
> [Psalm121:1-8KJV].

12. **The Word of God is still Modern & Relevant.**

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> "*According to Guinness World Records as of 1995, the Bible is still the bestselling book of all time with an estimated 5 billion copies sold and distributed.*"
>
> [Wikipedia].

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Chapter 5

THE BIBLE: THE BOOK OF BOOKS BY THE KING OF KINGS

(If the Bible really were only a collection of ‘fairy tales’, then why is it banned, or persecuted, in at least 52 countries of the world?)

1. **The World's Best-selling Books.** According to *Wikipedia*, these were the world’s top-selling books in November 2020:

1.1 *The Communist Manifesto* (Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels): >500 million.

1.2 *A Tale of Two Cities* (Charles Dickens): 200 million.

1.3 *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* (J.K. Rowling): 120 million.

1.4 *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (C.S. Lewis): 85 million.

1.5 *She, A History of Adventure* (H. Rider Haggard): 83 million.

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1.6 *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (Carlo Collidi): >80 million.

1.7 *The Da Vinci Code* (Dan Brown): 80 million.

1.8 *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (J.K. Rowling): 77 million.
1.9 *Harry Potter Series #2-#6* (J.K. Rowling): 65 million each.

1.10 *The Alchemist* (O. Alquimista): 65 million.

1.11 *The Catcher in the Rye* (J.D. Salinger): 65 million.

1.12 *The Bridges of Madison County* (Robert J. Waller): 60 million.

1.13 *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ* (Lew Wallace): 50 million (plus many more titles lower down the scale).

2. **Regularly Updated Books.**

2.1 *Xinhua Dictionary* (Ed. Wei Jiangong): 567 million.

2.2 *Scouting for Boys* (Robert Baden-Powell): 100-150 million.

2.3 *The McGuffey Readers* (W.H. McGuffey): 125 million.

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2.4 *Guinness World Records* (Various Authors): 115 million (plus many more titles lower down the scale).

3. **The BOOK of Books by the KING of Kings (BIBLE).**

"The Bible has had a massive influence on literature and history, especially in the Western world, where the Gutenberg Bible was the first book printed using movable type. According to the March 2007 edition of Time, the Bible 'has done more to shape literature, history, entertainment, and culture than any book ever written. Its influence on world history is unparalleled, and shows no signs of abating.' With estimated total sales of over 5 billion copies, it is widely considered to be the best-selling book of all time. As of the 2000s, it sells approximately 100 million copies annually."

[Wikipedia].

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Chapter 6

WHY THE BIBLE SURVIVES

(Silver tried in a furnace of the Earth, purified seven times)

1. **The WORDS of the LORD.** The Bible teaches:

> *"The Words of Jehovah are pure Words, like silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. You shall keep them, O Jehovah, You shall preserve them from this generation forever."*
>
> [Psalm12:6-7MKJV].

2. **The Magic of Silver.** Since the words of God are compared to silver, and the durability, lustre and cherished monetary value of this precious metal have been proved over centuries, I find it expedient to discuss the topic with the aid of the fundamental qualities of silver. The holy words of God are precious indeed!

3. **The Five Pillars of Silver's success.** According to 'Gainesville Coins' (online) **t**here are at least nine reasons that make silver so valuable as a precious metal. For the purpose of this article, however, I will discuss its value by elaborating on the five pillars that have made silver as a commodity so successful over

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time, i.e., *Divisibility, Durability, Portability, Cognizability & Store of Value.*

3.1 **Divisibility.** *"Unlike many barter items, silver can be divided into small units of equivalent composition."*

[Gainesville Coins].

Likewise, the Bible can be divided into two Testaments (Old & New), 66 books (39 Old Testament* & 27 New Testament) and thousands of useful scriptures & texts.

*Hebrew Bible.

3.2 **Portability.** *"Silver can easily be transported across long distances without degrading."*

[Gainesville Coins].

Likewise, the Bible has been successfully sent from Bible Societies and Bible Houses via colporteurs, missionaries and even the Internet to the ends of the earth.

3.3 **Durability.** "*Silver resists corrosion and remains durable, increasing how long it can stay in circulation. It is non-perishable."*

[Gainesville Coins].

The staying power of the Bible is legendary; it is still the world's uncontested bestseller reportedly at 100 million copies annually.

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3.4 **Cognizability & Store of Value.** *"This essentially means silver is readily recognized as having value, which allows it to be a good medium of exchange no matter the location … Over thousands of years, silver has a reliable track record of maintaining its purchasing power relative to other goods, services, and commodities."*

[Gainesville Coins].

Likewise, the Bible has consistently outsold and outperformed all other religious writings ever presented. No wonder Jesus Christ has said:

"The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My Words shall not pass away."

[Matthew24:35MKJV].

3.5 Surviving persecution. The Bible is still the world's bestseller selling approximately 100 million copies annually. It is an indestructible book despite the persecution and/or bans in 52 countries. A list of 52 countries where the Bible is illegal and/or severely persecuted:

Afghanistan; Iran; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Maldives; Mauritania; North Korea; Saudi Arabia; Somalia; Tajikistan; Turkmenistan; Uzbekistan; Yemen; Algeria; Bhutan; Brunei; China; Cuba; Djibouti; Eritrea; Kuwait; Laos; Libya; Malaysia; Morocco; Oman; Sudan; Tunisia; Bahrain; Bangladesh; Central African Republic; Columbia;

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Egypt; Ethiopia; India; Iraq; Jordan; Kenya; Lebanon; Mali; Myanmar (Burma); Nepal; Niger; Nigeria; Pakistan; Philippines (Mindanao); Sri Lanka; Syria; Tanzania; Turkey; United Arab Emirates; Vietnam.

Do the math: If the Bible really is a book of fairy tales, why is it banned and/or persecuted in 52 countries?

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Chapter 7

B.I.B.L.E:
BASIC INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE LEAVING EARTH

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(Wise Christians take the Bible seriously)

1. The Bible (Christianity). According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* parts of the *Old Testament (Hebrew Bible)* were written as early as the 10th century B.C. with 'final redaction and canonisation' during the 6th and 5th centuries B.C. The *New Testament* was written during the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D. This makes the *Christian Bible* approximately 3000 years *(Old Testament)* to 2000 years *(New Testament)* old.

2. **New Testament Attestation.** Writes Dr. F.F. Bruce, the late Ryland's Professor of *Biblical Criticism & Exegesis* at the *University of Manchester:*

> *"There is no body of ancient literature in the world which enjoys such a wealth of good textual attestation as the New Testament …" The evidence for our New Testament writings is ever so much greater than the evidence for many writings of classical writers, the authenticity of which no one dreams of questioning. And if the New Testament were a collection of secular writings, their authenticity would generally be regarded as beyond all doubt."*
>
> [The John Ankerberg Show].

3. **Comparing Science & Atheism.** It is obvious that scientists (atheists & some theists alike) will

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invariably ascribe ‘millions & billions of years’ to the *age of the Cosmos* or e.g., the *age of species (biological)* on earth. For instance, are the ages of galaxies like *Andromeda* and the *Sombrero* given by most as *10 billion years* and *10-13 billion years* respectively. Similarly, are the oldest (emergence of) life forms on earth given as *4.41 billion yrs.*

4. **The Bitter Irony.** So here we have a situation where scientists, i.e., a group who are strict sticklers to the ‘scientific method’ and ‘empiricism’, are studying heavenly bodies (astronomy, astrophysics, cosmology etc.) *‘billions of years’ old* and often ‘*million & billions’ of light-years* away making not only them but also the very *information (unverifiable, by the way) received at such distances ancient and probably obsolete.*

At the same time palaeontologists & geologists will study and draw conclusions from fossils and rock-formations allegedly *‘millions of years’* old (also unverifiable) and expect us to believe everything they say.

Because they build their theories and hypotheses on observations about the Cosmos (Cosmology) described by themselves as ‘billions and millions of years old’ and fossils (palaeontology) ‘millions of years’ old (and with all this ‘evidence’ unverifiable and unfalsifiable in every instance) they still have the audacity to label the Bible, a record that is only *a few*

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thousand years old, as ‘too ancient’ to rely on and therefore obsolete!

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Chapter 8

MESSIANIC PROPHECIES FROM THE HEBREW BIBLE (OLD TESTAMENT): SOME EXAMPLES

(As fulfilled by Jesus Christ, New Testament)

1. **The Prophet Isaiah.** The Prophet Isaiah prophesied (Hebrew Bible/Old Testament) what Evangelical Christians consider a 'messianic prophecy' pointing to the coming and ministry of Jesus Christ:

> *"Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?*
>
> *"For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.*
>
> *"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*
>
> *"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*

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"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

"He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

"And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

"He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

[Isaiah 53:1-12KJV].

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the

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brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound ...

"To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

"To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified."

[Isaiah 61:1-3KJV].

2. **Psalm 22. A Psalm of David.**

"To the Chief Musician, on the deer of the dawn. A Psalm of David. My God, my God, why have You forsaken me, and are far from my deliverance, and from the words of my groaning?

O my God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not answer; and in the night, and am not silent.

But You are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

Our fathers trusted in You; they trusted, and You delivered them.

They cried to You, and were delivered; they trusted in You, and were not ashamed.

But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised by the people.

All who see Me mock me; they shoot out the lip; they shake the head, saying,

He trusted on Jehovah; let Him deliver Him; let Him rescue Him, since He delights in Him!

For You are He who took Me out of the womb, causing Me to trust while on My mother's breasts.

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I was cast on You from the womb; You are My God from My mother's belly.
Be not far from Me; for trouble is near, for there is none to help.
Many bulls have circled around Me; strong bulls Of Bashan have surrounded Me.
They opened wide their mouths on Me, like a ripping and a roaring lion.
I am poured out like water, and all My bones are spread apart; My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of My bowels.
My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws;
and You have brought Me into the dust of death. For dogs have circled around Me; the band of spoilers have hemmed Me in, piercers of My hands and My feet.
I can count all My bones; they look and stare at Me.
They divide My garments among them and cast lots for My clothing."

[Psalm22:1-18MKJV].

3. **The Prophet Daniel.**

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

[Daniel 9:26KJV].

4. **The Prophet Jesus Christ (Referring to the Old Testament).**

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"And he [JESUS] came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

"And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias [ISAIAH]. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

"To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

"And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

"And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

[Luke4:16-21KJV].

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Chapter 9

MYTHS THAT STILL CONFUSE PEOPLE TODAY

(“Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make ye free!”)

1. **Myth #1. “God was caught completely off-guard when Adam & Eve sinned in Eden!”**

FALSE: God is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent and cannot be ‘caught off-guard’ by anyone or anything. He knows the END from the BEGINNING and, by the time the foundations of the earth were laid, He had already prepared the body of Christ as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, including for the sins of Adam & Eve:

> *"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."*
>
> [Isaiah46:9-10KJV].
>
> *"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by*

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tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."

[1Peter1:18-20KJV].

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

[Revelation13:8KJV].

2. **Myth #2: "Scientists will one day be able to tell us exactly how the Universe had begun and how it will end!"**

FALSE. Obviously, knowledge will increase toward the end-times but, outside of Biblical revelation, 'no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end'.

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

[Daniel 12:3-4KJV].

"He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."

[Ecclesiastes3:11KJV].

3. **Myth#3: "God is limited and confined to the 'living space' of (maximum) 'Three Heavens'!"**

FALSE. It is true that the heavens constitute God's Throne and that the *Third Heaven* probably is where *Paradise* is situated, but bear in mind that 'the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain God'. Space, Time and Matter (as we know it) are not prerequisite dimensions to ensure the existence of God (Do the math: He Himself has made Space, Time and Matter in the first place, so why would He need it as a prerequisite for His existence?). As already mentioned before:

> *"In the beginning [TIME] God created the heaven [SPACE] and the earth [MATTER]."*
>
> [Genesis1:1KJV].

Notes:

(i) *Time (Beginning)* before *Space (Heaven)* otherwise when would He put *Space (Heaven)?*

(ii) *Time (Beginning)* & *Space (Heaven)* before *Matter (Earth)* otherwise when and where would He put *Matter (Earth)?*

> *"Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?"*
>
> [Isaiah66:1KJV].
>
> *"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether*

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out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth; such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

[2 Corinthians 12:2-4KJV].

"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?"

[1Kings8:27 KJV].

4. **Myth #4: "The brightest of scientists can outsmart God!"**

FALSE. No man, whether equipped with the I.Q. (Intelligence Quotient) of an Einstein (say 160) or a Goethe (say 220) can outsmart God. Finite minds cannot comprehend or grasp Infinity; however, the best we can do to understand the fact of infinity is to assume God's (yet undetermined but assumed) I.Q. of Infinity to the power of Infinity, as mentioned before:
INFINITY^{infinity}

The Bible teaches that God's intellect (understanding) is infinite:

"Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite."

[Psalm147:5KJV].

The Bible says it and that settles it.

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5. **Myth #5: "Scientists can disprove the existence of God!"**

FALSE. In order to be able to do that, those scientists will have to be present everywhere in the Universe all at the same time just to make sure they are not missing out on anything; however, even *then* they still may not find God; as the saying goes, one does not go looking for Henry Ford in the engine of a Ford-automobile. Some notes:

5.1 **The preponderance of knowledge today.** Scientists have admitted (i) that they only know about 10% to 20% of what is going on in our oceans (the rest of the 80% to 90% is still 'unmapped and unexplored') and (ii) only about 5% of what is going on in the Universe (the rest of 95% is 'undetectable by scientific instruments dark matter + dark energy').

I am amazed that people will risk their lives to go to a planet (Mars), a veritable wilderness on steroids, founded on the words and promises of scientists and space entrepreneurs who by their own admission only know about 5% of what is going on the Universe (!). Never say I didn't warn you aspiring 'Mars-migrants': Mars is a long, long way from home.

5.2 **Finding God.** It thus stands to reason that God may be obscured from their view or scientific observations in the 80% to 90% they

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still don't know about the oceans or from the 95% they still don't know about the Universe.

5.3 **Only God.** The ultimate irony is that only God has the authority, knowledge, information, wisdom, influence, stature, Universal reach and Cosmic gravitas to prove either the existence or non-existence of God.

6. **Myth #6: "The many anatomical similarities between Man and the Primates is due to the fact that Man shares a common ancestor with the Primates!"**

FALSE. The many anatomical similarities between Man and the Primates are easily explained: It is because Man and the Primates share a common (mutual) Creator (not a common 'ancestor').

7. **Myth #7. "Evolution is progressive over time and will yet guide mankind to species-perfection!"**

FALSE. Here follows my advice to those, especially the 'transhumanists', who believe the absurd (anti-God and anti-Christian) 'progressive Evolutionism' rhetoric doing the rounds:

7.1 **Human mortality rate.** Don't hold your breath, for after 'millions of years' of so-called 'progressive Evolution' (i.e., 'natural selection'; fictional 'beneficial mutations';

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'adaptations'; 'speciation', 'punctuated equilibrium', 'Lamarckism' etc.) 'Evolution' has 'progressed' *(sic)* to the magnificent point where the mortality rate for mankind is still 100% for every generation in every nation. So, when do the evolutionists expect for 'progressive Evolution' to ever get it right?

7.2 **Death-after-Death.** Evolutionists believe in death-after-death, a policy clearly founded on the fact that their 'Evolutionism' cannot improve on the 100% mortality rate for every generation of mankind that doggedly persists even after 'millions of years' *(sic)* of 'progressive Evolution'. It is, in other words, nothing more than a ‘Dead Poets Society’ type of death-cult.

Do the math: What have they (i.e., the atheist-evolutionists and secular humanists) to offer but:

- a membership card from your nearest Secular Humanist Society or American Atheist Association.
- a 100% mortality rate* for every generation of mankind; and
- death-after-death?

*Despite the evolutionists’ so-called ‘progressive evolution’, there still are no 'super races' on earth; the mortality rate for every generation is 100% for <u>every generation for every nation</u>, i.e., from Hitler’s fictional ‘Aryan masters’ through

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smutty ‘film-studio producers guilds’ to the naked races still roaming the vast Amazon forests (sorry).

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Chapter 10

THE BIBLE: WORD OF GOD OR JUST A GUIDE ON MORALITY AND ETHICS?

(How we view and treat the Bible determines our destiny)

1. **Great question.** It would appear as if there were two major 'schools of thought' over this question driving the narrative today:

1.1 **Old School Fundamentalists.** The first is the *'Old School' fundamentalist* group of Christians who still believe in *(i) the historicity and authenticity of the Bible (Old & New Testaments)*, the *(ii) veracity of the Genesis Creation Record* and the *(iii) authenticity of the claims of Jesus Christ as the Son of GOD* and of the *Biblical miracles.*

1.2 **'Postmodernist Christian Agnostics & Atheists'.** On the other hand do we have those 'postmodernist colleagues', including a few broadminded agnostics and skeptics (referred to these days as *'Postmodernist Christian Agnostics & Atheists')* who insist that the Bible is no more than a collection of ancient Jewish myths, legends, traditions and

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folklore not worth paying much attention to, but, admittedly, probably still useful as an excellent *'Guide on Morality & Ethics'* for communities to conscientiously follow in the interest of law & order in society.

In many instances, among this group Jesus Christ is usually dismissed as an ordinary first-century, albeit disingenuous '*religious fanatic' (at worst)* who was arrested as a *'public nuisance' (sic)* or a kind of *'religious teacher' (at best)* but with His claims to divinity and many miracles ridiculed as fabrications by disingenuous followers (zealots and propagandists) who allegedly needed to create a 'folk hero' for the besieged children of Israel.

2. **The Judeo-Christian legacy.** The *Judeo-Christian values of the Bible (Hebrew Bible/Old Testament & New Testament)* have come a long way, literally millenniums, through the crucible of time and on the anvil of suffering to establish civilisations based on justice and the rule of law. In fact, much of *Roman-Dutch* and *English-Scots* jurisprudence was founded on such values, usefully augmented today by e.g., indigenous laws and customs as well as case-law precedents in *Common Law* etc.

On the question of e.g., *New Testament attestation,* many Biblical scholars tell us that there is more evidence that Jesus Christ lived (and that the Bible is authentic) than the fact that Julius Caesar ever lived. So, either the Bible

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is God's Word worth paying attention to, or it is not.

3. **The worst philosophical error.** One can make no worse philosophical error about the Bible as to use it only as a *'guide on morality & ethics'.* For this crazy idea to come from educated people, even those with PhD's, boggles the mind.

Do the math: What kind of serious scholar in his right mind will ever use an *(i) (alleged) 'mythical book', (ii) allegedly replete with 'fraudulent claims' founded on the teachings of (iii) (alleged) charlatans as a 'great book' (!) on Morality & Ethics?* It would, in fact, considering the bad press and scathing review of the Bible and the Gospel narratives by these geniuses, be just about the worst possible book (for them) to use as a guide on morality & ethics, and I find the fact that they do not recognise this silly (monumental) philosophical anomaly for what it is quite shocking.

Either we accept the veracity of the Bible and the mission, character and divine stature of Jesus Christ at (informed) face value or we don't ... it would simply be ridiculous to write the Biblical narrative from Genesis to Revelation off as 'myth', legend' and fictional 'folklore' (in other words, as 'fake news') and then at the same time to go ahead and endorse and promote and even defend it in public as a great 'Guide on Morality & Ethics'! What are these 'intellectual giants' (postmodernist, wannabe secular humanist

geniuses) thinking ... that the public is plain stupid?

4. **Who God will honour.** God has solemnly promised that He will honour those afflicted and contrite ones who tremble at His Word:

> *"But to this one I [GOD] will look, to the afflicted and contrite spirit, and the one who trembles at My Word."*
>
> [Isaiah66:2bMKJV].

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Chapter 11

THE HOLY BIBLE: CAN IT STILL BE TRUSTED?

(How the Bible still shapes the World)

1. **The Holy Bible.** According to Gutenberg Bible:

> *"Johann Gutenberg holds the distinction of being the inventor of the movable-type printing press. In 1455, Gutenberg produced what is considered to be the first book ever printed: a Latin language Bible, printed in Mainz, Germany."*
>
> [www.Gutenberg-bible.com].

> *"According to the March 2007 edition of Time, the Bible "has done more to shape literature, history, entertainment, and culture than any book ever written. Its influence on world history is unparalleled, and shows no signs of abating. With estimated total sales of over five billion copies, it is widely considered to be the best-selling book of all time. As of the 2000s, it sells approximately 100 million copies annually."*
>
> [Wikipedia].

2. **Can the Bible still be trusted?** Atheists, skeptics, secular humanists and pagans at large often will complain that the Bible is an antiquated, obsolete collection of Jewish myths

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and legends from the Old & New Testaments. The postmodernist 'Jesus Seminar' movement, using the juvenile (unscientific) decision-making system of four different coloured beads (reminiscent of Haman from the Book of Esther) has written off about 82% of the words of Jesus from the Gospels as 'fictional' and thus untrue.

The 'Christian atheists' *(sic)* went incongruous by rejecting most of the entire Gospel narrative as a myth, while retaining the teachings of Jesus Christ as an ideal 'ethical model' to emulate. Now, why would any educated person in his right mind want to use (as a model to emulate) the ethical teachings of a person who they themselves allege had lied about his divine origins & status and had lied about his miracles ('conjuror's tricks') & authority to forgive sins?

3. **Why the Bible should still be trusted.**

3.1 **The Bible as 'Antiquated & Obsolete'.** Since the Bible is no more than a few thousand (no more than ±3400) years old, I find it quite disingenuous for critics of the Bible objecting to it as 'antiquated & obsolete' while they build their 'science' (sic) on the (unverifiable, unfalsifiable) 'empirical evidence' (sic) founded on:

- Fossils purportedly 'millions of years' old ('Palaeontology'); and

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- Galaxies purportedly ‘billions of years;’ old (‘Cosmic’ or ‘Stellar Evolution’).

P.S. The million-dollar question: How come time-tested archaeological evidence founded on a 3400-year-old Bible should be dismissed as ‘antiquated & obsolete’ but (unverifiable, unfalsifiable!) ‘empirical evidence’ founded on fossils purportedly ‘millions of years’ old and galaxies purportedly ‘billions of years’ old in terms of the so-called ‘scientific method’ (a system of scientific analysis developed about 400 years ago) should not?

3.2 **Scriptural Attestation.** Although the (Biblical) archaeological support for the historicity & authenticity of the Bible is undisputed among Bible scholars and just about all reasonable (Biblical) archaeologists, the real litmus test for the priceless value of the Bible actually is how it is, on a daily basis, still changing, and salvaging peoples’ lives for the better.

4. **Transforming people.** Bear in mind: The *Reformation* happened to reform the Church at large; *books* are written to inform and inspire people, but the *Bible* was written (and *Jesus Christ* has come) to transform people.

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Chapter 12

THE HOLY SYMBIOSIS BETWEEN THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST AND THE LAW OF MOSES

(The Mystery of the Church and its link to the Law of Moses)

1. **Proposition #1.** There exists a holy symbiosis* between the *Law of Moses* and the *Gospel of Jesus Christ.* For Christians thus to summarily dismiss the *Old Testament (Hebrew Bible)* and the Law of Moses from the Bible as antiquated and redundant would be akin to cutting off the branch they are sitting on.

> * *" ... the living together in more or less intimate association or close union of two dissimilar organisms ... mutualism: cooperative relationship (as between two persons or groups)."*
> [Merriam-Webster].

2. **Proposition #2.** From *Genesis to Malachi* the Old Testament is replete with Messianic Prophecies pointing to the coming of Jesus Christ. Christians view the *Old Testament as Christ concealed* and the *New Testament (Hebrew Bible)* as *Christ revealed.*

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3. **Proposition #3.** The Bible warns Christianity (the 'grafted-in branch' from the 'wild olive tree') not to boast but to remain humble about Christianity's roots, i.e., *Judaism* (the 'Root' from the original 'Olive Tree' itself). See Romans 11:1-36.

4. **Proposition #4.** The *Law of Moses* was mankind's Schoolmaster toward *Christ.* Once Christ has come, the *Schoolmaster (the Moral Law)* did become subservient to born-again believers walking in *Faith & Love* and not in the *rule of Law.*

> *"Why then the Law? It was added because of transgressions, until the Seed should come to those to whom it had been promised, being ordained through angels in the Mediator's hand. But the Mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the Law then against the promises of God? Let it not be said! For if a law had been given which could have given life, indeed righteousness would have been out of Law.*
>
> *"But the Scripture shut up all under sin, so that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept under Law, having been shut up to the faith about to be revealed. So that the Law has become a trainer of us until Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*
>
> *"But faith coming, we are no longer under a trainer. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus."*
>
> [Galatians3:19-26 MKJV].

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5. **Proposition #5.** Jesus Christ did not come to 'annul' the Law, but to *fulfil* it. When Christians walk in love and faith by the power of the Holy Spirit, the still, soft voice of the Holy Spirit (our 'Paraclete') will always affirm (and never contradict or denounce) the *Moral Law* entrenched in Judaism as God's *Gold Standard* and *Moral Compass* of choice. Murder, theft, and adultery are still wrong, and children must still honour father and mother. Nothing has changed about the merit of this *Moral Compass.*

6. **Proposition #6.** The pagan unbeliever (i.e., 'heathen') will hardly develop an interest in the *Gospel of Jesus Christ* (the Saviour!) unless he is convinced of sin by the very moral *Law of Moses (the Schoolmaster!)* that 'condemns' him. This *Law* is still written on the hearts of all people and has never been rescinded.

> *"For as many as sinned without Law will also perish without Law. And as many as have sinned within Law shall be judged through Law. For it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified. For when the nations, who do not have the Law, do by nature the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law unto themselves; who show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and the thoughts between one another accusing or even excusing one another, in a day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."*
>
> [Romans2:12-16MKJV].

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"... be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, in this name does this man stand before you whole. This is the Stone which you builders have counted worthless, and He has become the Head of the Corner. And there is salvation in no other One; for there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

[Acts4:10-12MKJV].

7**. Proposition #7. The Mystery of Israel's Salvation.** The Apostle Paul writes:

"I say then, Did not God put away His people? Let it not be said! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God did not thrust out His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture said in Elijah, how he pleaded with God against Israel, saying, "Lord, they killed Your prophets and dug down Your altars, and I am left alone, and they seek my life."

"But what does the Divine answer say to him? 'I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Even so then, also in this present time a remnant according to the election of grace has come into being. But if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it is of works, then it is no more of grace; otherwise work is no more work.

"What then? Israel has not obtained that which it seeks, but the election obtained it, and the rest were hardened even as it is written, 'God gave to them a spirit of slumber, eyes not seeing, and ears not hearing' until this day. And David said, "Let

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their table become for a snare and a trap and a stumbling block and a recompense to them.

"Let their eyes be darkened so that they may not see, and their back always bowing. I say then, Did they not stumble that they fall? Let it not be! But by their slipping away came salvation to the nations, to provoke them to jealousy. But if their slipping away is the riches of the world, and their default is the riches of the nations, how much more their fullness?

"For I speak to you, the nations; since I am the apostle of the nations, I glorify my ministry; if by any means I may provoke those who are my flesh to jealousy, and might save some of them. For if their casting away is the reconciling of the world, what is the reception except life from the dead?

"For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, also the branches. And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and became a sharer of the root and the fatness of the olive tree with them, do not boast against the branches. But if you boast, it is not you that bears the root, but the root bears you.

"You will say then, The branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in. Well, because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be high-minded, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, fear lest He also may not spare you either! Behold then the kindness, and the severity of God; on those having fallen, severity; but on you, kindness, if you continue in the kindness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

"And those also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in. For God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut out of the natural

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wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more these being according to nature will be grafted into their own olive-tree? For I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, lest you should be wise within yourselves; that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the nations has comes in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, 'There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is My covenant with them, when I have taken away their sins.' Indeed as regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes. But as regards the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the free gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

"For as you also then disbelieved God, but now have been shown mercy through their disbelief, even so these also have not believed now, so that through your mercy they may also obtain mercy. For God has shut up all in unbelief, so that He might show mercy to all.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counsellor? Or who first gave to Him, and it will be repaid to him? For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things; to Him be glory forever! Amen."

[Romans11:1-36 MKJV].

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Chapter 13

IN SEARCH OF MAN'S ULTIMATE SOURCE OF MORAL AUTHORITY

(How else could we decide between Right & Wrong?)

1. **World War 2 and the Nazis.** During *World War 2,* the Nazis' meticulous administrative attention to detail, first so admired by some the world over, eventually worked with diabolical efficacy against them when they, with the Allies fast approaching their notorious concentration camps and 'death-camps', had to evacuate their posts *poste haste* to flee *en masse* for their lives.

In the ensuing confusion, those meticulous records that were supposed to have been destroyed and kept out of the Allies' hands, were left carelessly behind and, eventually, were equally meticulously recovered and presented by the Prosecution at *Nuremberg* as deadly, incontestable *prima facie* evidence of Nazi atrocities at execution mills all over 'Third-Reich driven' Nazi-controlled Europe.

2. **The Nuremberg Trials.** In the light of such irrefutable documentary proof (that among others also included ample film-footage from the

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Russian liberators of decrepit and starving inmates at *Auschwitz-Birkenau* etc.) the Nazi-collaborators (including people like Luftwaffe-master Hermann Göring) then resorted to a very expedient and unconventional tactic:

They pleaded 'personal unaccountability' on the grounds that they (like all good soldiers do) were only 'following orders', and that nowhere in 'German Law' the so-called 'atrocities' as alleged by the eyewitnesses and prosecutors were necessarily specifically listed as illegal (!). They then brazenly wanted to know from the Court in terms of which 'Law on the books' they were being technically charged, to which Senior Judge, Justice Jackson (unfazed) replied:

> *"We propose to punish acts which have been regarded as criminal since the time of Cain and have been so written in every civilised code."*
> [Shirer: 653].

The Nazi collaborators probably never saw that one coming; they had reckoned that to change tactics by switching from extremist, draconian *right-wing totalitarianism* to the *situational ethics* and *moral relativism* of *extremist leftism* they were going to escape the gallows, but, in the end the time-tested rock-solid *commandments from the Bible* were invoked by the judges at Nuremburg to charge and condemn them one by one for their part in Adolf Hitler's reign of terror. The self-same Bible has warned:

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> *"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."*
>
> [Revelation20:12KJV].

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Chapter 14

THE FREE MORAL AGENT

(Life is all about Choices)

1. **Predestination myths.** For years and, as a young adult, I have been duped for some time by those agents of diabolical pessimism, i.e., that we humans are the hapless victims of e.g., 'predestination', 'fate' and/or 'karma', i.e., mindless automatons (tin soldiers) with no will of our own and thus not responsible for our future, behaviour, acts and deeds. *"Your destiny is in the stars!"* the astrologists also said.

I once even knew a man with a master's degree in theology who tried his level best to convince me that we were wasting our time with missions on the mission field and urban evangelisation in the local church.

"God has already decided who will be saved and who will be condemned!" he said, practically suggesting that all our efforts to bring the unconverted to Christ and Salvation by preaching the gospel, or through Bible & tract distribution, personal testimony and Christian activity (books, articles, blogs, websites, video-clips, CD's, DVD's, community-radio & DSTV broadcasts etc.) were of (noble) academic value only but for all intents and purposes a monumental exercise in futility.

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Just because God wields absolute and infinite power does not means He is a dictator and a bully who will abuse such power willy-nilly like some pagan deity from the days of Elijah ... and just because He knows in advance how we, in the final analysis and at the end of the proverbial 'day' will have responded to and used our God-given gift of free will and the free gift of faith (as free moral agents), does not mean those outcomes were mechanically manipulated and foreordained by God just because He sort of liked some people and detested the rest.

Of course, He has the final say over the destiny of man, but we can rest assured that, in the end, His judgments will always be fair and justified in all respects; God would certainly never waste His time admonishing us to 'repent', or to 'pray' (Prayer changes things!) were the future really cast in unrelenting 'predestined concrete'; that would be akin to primitive, pagan fatalism and totally contrary to what the Bible teaches.

2. **God is not a Diabolical Creator but a loving Heavenly Father**. God is a loving God and Heavenly Father, and the Biblical definition of a 'loving Heavenly Father' precludes a malicious and malevolent Creator with all kinds of diabolical designs on the hapless human race ... what kind of a 'God' would anyway create and want subjects, servants, disciples and worshippers (and born-again children!) mechanically programmed to love Him instead of doing it voluntarily out of pure and spontaneous

admiration, appreciation and love? The Bible says:

> *"For I know the purposes which I am purposing for you, says Jehovah; purposes of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you shall call on Me, and you shall go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you shall seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart."*
>
> [Jeremiah29:11-13MKJV].

In other words, people who preach and teach such diabolical doctrines and even ascribe such diabolical, outlandish characteristics to the God of the Bible (i.e., the YHWH or Jehovah) or of Moses and Mt. Sinai are for all practical purposes meddling in a doctrine that for all intents and purposes borders on *'Christian Astrology',* the Siamese twin of *Christian Atheism.*

God has *Absolute & Infinite Free Will,* and obviously will the people of His creation (created in His image!) bear the image of their Heavenly Father as created beings with a *free will* of their own too.

The only difference is that, whereas God's *Free Will* is *Absolute & Infinite,* mankind's *free will* as a fallen race is seriously limited and (at best) curtailed, borrowed and derived from (and subjugated to) the Father's *Free Will.*

3. **God will never abuse the fact that He has 'inside information' (future knowledge) about His subjects.** The fact that God knows in

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advance how people will have exercised their free will does not mean that God has rescinded their free will or predetermined their futures notwithstanding and irrespective of how they have lived and what kind of moral choices they have made.

Some fictional 'omnipotent deity' might, hypothetically speaking, for instance be able to know in advance that tomorrow morning there were going to be some showers and that, as a result, tomorrow afternoon's road was going to be wet ... that does not mean that tomorrow afternoon's wet road has caused tomorrow morning's rain showers just because the 'omnipotent deity' had known everything in advance. I get the impression that the kind of conduct and characteristics some are aspiring to ascribe to God should rather be ascribed to Satan ('Diabolos') instead … let's be reasonable.

I once, for instance, knew a spiritual leader who taught with great relish that, if perhaps due to the neglect of parents or of the adopting parents (or any specific caregivers) assigned to the care of a particular baby, such a baby was surely destined for hell if ever found to be 'unbaptised' (read 'not christened') for whatever reason. In other words, according to him, the eternal destiny and lot of a helpless, innocent infant hinged on the flimsy and fickle conduct of ordinary, sinful and negligent people.

4. **Where God enters the story.** Bear in mind that there is a mystery factor to considered, and that is that where man fails in his duty toward others God will step in to do what is necessary to

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safeguard peoples' destinies; He will make sure that nobody will ever go lost because of any fallible and sinful man's neglect.

Imagine the lives of the billions of Africa or Asia … I cannot in my wildest nightmares imagine those billions, most of them probably still largely ignorant about the Gospel, simply created as cannon-fodder for Hell because there never were enough missionaries or missionary efforts to evangelise them in time before death or before the Second Coming of Christ, whichever comes first.

God's Kingdom must never be reduced to a 'numbers game'; the inviting door to God's Ark of Salvation was only closed after God had ascertained beyond a reasonable doubt that, besides Noah and his family, nobody else was interested to ever enter the Ark. And, by the way, God *Himself* finally closed the door to the Ark, neither Noah nor some legalistic theologian from Oxbridge University … no man on earth is qualified to shut the door on a lost soul.

> *"And they that entered, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him [NOAH]. And Jehovah shut him in."*
>
> [Genesis7:16MKJV].

Somehow somewhere where our efforts will have failed God will step up to the plate to deal with our neglect; why would He relinquish absolute control (over the destinies of precious souls created in the image of God) to a group of people ('Christians') who, by His own admission

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(and theirs!) are imperfect and at best fallible ‘sinners saved by grace’?

The very reason that Christ is the only way to Salvation means that the message of Salvation cannot (and should never) be left in the hands of fallible, fickle and often unfaithful humans without the cast-iron assurance of the Holy Spirit’s indispensable silent, divine input, hence so many personal testimonies of people from other faiths coming to Christ through dreams and visions without the help and interference of missionaries and personal workers.

So, let’s drop the nasty habit of condemning people to eternal damnation just because they are not (yet) part or card-carrying members of our culture, nationality, our little house-church fraternity or of our denomination; in the end we are only ‘co-workers’ with God … we are not God.

As a case in point, I need to share the story (whether a real historical event or just an urban legend I cannot tell) my pastor told me years ago during the mid-1970s when I was still a very young novice of a youth leader in my church; it apparently involved a church of which the resident pastor had become disconcertingly lukewarm in his heart, had fallen into sin and had been neglecting his duties to a point where a prophet reportedly walked up to him one Sunday morning before the service, looked him in the eye and said:

> *“God told me to tell you that your lamp is going to be removed and that your future pastoral substitute, a man still blissfully unconverted and*

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ignorant about the Bible, is at this very moment sitting on his porch drinking beer and reading the Sunday newspaper!"

What a terrible indictment of anyone engaged in the work of the Kingdom of God.

4. **Man is not omnipotent.** Also bear in mind that the Creator God's *Absolute & Infinite Free Will* is by default omnipotent whereas mankind's free will is by default finite, derived and not omnipotent.

I have never believed and said that mankind's free will means a kind of omnipotence that can override the Sovereign God's Absolute & Infinite Free Will left, right and centre and willy-nilly at will. God can always pull the plug on our designs; that is why He is God, but that, however, has nothing to do with 'predestination'.

If anything, so-called 'Election' has to do with Israel, the nation (the original 'olive tree') chosen as the original stewards of God's sacred commandments and oracles.

This will probably remain a mystery indefinitely, i.e., the mysterious, divine symbiosis between *(i) the Absolute Sovereignty of God* and *(ii) the delegated free will of man.* In our world such designs may appear illogical and impossible; in God's world everything is possible and must be accepted by childlike faith or not at all.

There is no way we should allow spiritually unregenerated philosophers and unregenerated

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atheists and pagans to unilaterally define what it entails, and as Christians we voluntarily dedicate our lives to God with the specific intent to allow God, the Ultimate Mind, to handle our affairs and guide us in our daily walk of faith for the simple reason that He is wiser and knows better, and I wouldn't want it any other way; that is why *prayer* was invented. Having said that, however, that still does not mean that we have abdicated (or are unconditionally exonerated) as regards our accountability for our moral choices.

5. **The 'Election' vs. 'Free Will' debate.** The nasty 'Reformed' (Calvinist) school's stand-off with the 'Arminian' school (of Jacobus Arminius), or vice versa over the issue of *predestination vs. free will* is totally uncalled for … it is not supposed to be an *'either-or'* deadlock and clearly shows how little such belligerents (on both sides of the aisle) still know about the (Absolute & Infinite) omnipotence of God.

Let's get over it: There is no philosophical contradiction as regards the point of departure that *God's sovereignty is Absolute,* and that *man has free will over his moral choices.* With God all things are possible. As Charles Spurgeon has pointed out years ago, the (apparently irreconcilable) parallel lines of 'God's Sovereignty' and 'Man's Free Will' may somehow in Eternity eventually converge and meet after all … let's not try and tell God, a God of miracles, how 'omnipotent' He is (or is not) or how to run His own Universe.

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6. **Circumstances & Environment (Nature vs. Nurture).** Now, no reasonable person today would claim absolute perfection, or that he or she is in perfect control of nature, the environment and/or circumstances (or even of his own temperament!) always. Some are born into wealth and with a head-start to success, others into abject poverty and a lifetime of gruelling physical labour or a struggle of some sorts, e.g., a physical handicap or mental disability, or as the victims of a corrupt, racist, genocidal, brutal, communist, fascist, or Bolshevik regime.

Some are born in palaces outrageously privileged and stinking rich; others are born in Calcutta on some pavement or in some derelict shack in Diepsloot where they grow old and die after never even having tasted the luxury of a decent piece of chocolate cake straight from the oven or of a hot shower in the dead of winter.

6. **Why does God hold people responsible for and punish them for their evil deeds?** Be that as it may, the fact remains that we are created in the image of God (who has *Free Will)* with a (*derivative) free will* of our own and thus responsible for our *moral choices.* I must repeat: The gift of free will does not imply 'omnipotence'; it only means that we will be held responsible for our moral choices, because we are!

Accepting or rejecting Jesus Christ as our Saviour would, for instance, constitute a

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monumental moral choice. Besides, if we were not responsible for our moral choices, then why did God have a serious issue with:

- Cain for murdering Abel?

- The citizens of Sodom & Gomorrah for their assault on the guests of Lot?

- The evil Haman for persecuting the Jews in the days of Mordecai and Esther?

- Saul for consulting the deceased spirit of the Witch of Endor?

- The evil Nabal for refusing to assist David with food and sustenance for his men in the days of Saul and Abigail?

- David for his adultery with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite (and his murder of Uriah)?

7. **Why does God reward and commend people for their good and kind (righteous) deeds?** On the other hand, why would God promise all kinds of rewards (plus the five very special 'crowns') to those who had faithfully served Him in their lifetime? For instance:

7.1 The Crown of Life.
[James1:12; Revelation2:10]

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7.2 The Incorruptible Crown.
[1Corinthians9:25]

7.3 The Crown of Righteousness.
[2Timothy4:8]

7.4 The Crown of Glory.
[1Peter5:2-4]

7.5 The Crown of Rejoicing.
[1Thessalonians2:19; Philippians4:1]

8. **The theological inconsistencies of some theologians.** I am constantly amazed at the inconsistencies among some theologians and spiritual leaders. For instance, as a youngster in the church we were constantly reminded that Christians were not supposed to boast about their good or kind deeds (i.e., to 'blow their trumpets in public') because such capabilities as the capacity to do good and to be kind were entirely God-driven and that all the credit and honour for it belonged to God who had given us the ability to be good and kind in the first place.

On the other hand, when a derelict drunk or backslidden brother tried to blame his misfortune, sin or apostasy on that 'sly old Devil', he usually was severely reprimanded and admonished never to pass the blame of his moral failures on to Satan, a very convenient 'moral crutch' to fall back on in an effort to be absolved from all wrong doing with the classic,

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pathetic *"Look what the Devil made me do!"* mantra.

He usually was then told that he was supposed to learn to take full responsibility for his conduct and behaviour and would probability be dismissed with all kinds of condescending, syrupy diatribes accompanied by lectures on 'stewardship', 'internal locus of control', 'self-control', 'temperance',' moderation-in-all-things' etc.

In other words, when we were good and did good, we were not supposed to take the credit for it for ourselves but had to 'blame' God for it; but, on the other hand, when we were bad and did bad things, we were not allowed to give the Devil the 'credit' for it but were supposed to take all the 'credit' for it on ourselves (?).

Clearly people who taught such contradictory things never had an idea where personal moral responsibility ever began or ended at all, or how 'locus of control' principles in behaviour studies work. Either God gets the 'credit' for my goodness and good deeds and the Devil the 'blame' for my badness and bad deeds, or I deserve the 'credit' for my righteous deeds and 'goodness' (if any) and I deserve the 'blame' for my bad deeds (if any).

Although it has nothing to do with salvation (of course and obviously salvation is by 'faith' only!) let's nevertheless be consistent in our theology, for goodness' sake. If that were not true, then why did Jesus promise a *reward* for those who would give as much as a cup of cold water to an exhausted saint; or why are all kinds of crowns

('rewards') laid up in Heaven for people of the faith for their faithfulness?

Obviously, God is the primary inspiration behind any noble trait we ever may exhibit, for, as Jesus has taught, without Him we can do nothing. After all, He is the 'Author or Prince of Life', and the Author and Finisher of our faith. But, however, we are (as alluded to before) not mindless zombies … we are *co-workers* with God. Let's face it, a child growing up in a loving home and a caring father will probably eventually exhibit the traits of his father.

Our Heavenly Father has paid us the priceless compliment of treating us not only as His creatures, subjects and redeemed saints, but also as emancipated co-workers and partners in the Gospel; in other words, *as if we are totally independent and in charge of our lives and destinies,* although we operate in the sunshine of His roving eye and mighty, guiding right Hand. Someone has once said, *"Behind a stern countenance, God hides a smiling face."*

9. **The Ultimate Choice is ours.** Be that as it may, God has left the choice open to us. He has given all of humanity a choice between the thesis (the Light, or Life) and the antithesis (the Darkness, or Death):

> *"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore CHOOSE LIFE, that both thou and thy seed may live …"*

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[Deuteronomy30:19MKJV].

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let the one hearing say, Come! And let the one who is thirsty come. And he WILLING, let him take of the Water of Life FREELY."

[Revelation22:17MKJV].

God has said it, I believe it (like a child) and that settles it. After all, of what use is the Bible and the Gospel to the man in the street if it takes a theologian with a PhD to decipher it and, as often has been the case, still, in spite of his impressive qualifications and great learning, he sometimes and in many cases still (like the learned postmodernists) comes to the conclusion that the *Jesus of history* is not the *Christ of the church* and that He was arrested and executed for being a charlatan, a cheap street magician and a public nuisance of a rabble rouser? Jesus has solemnly warned:

"At that hour the disciples came to Jesus, saying, Who is the greater in the kingdom of Heaven? And Jesus called a little child to Him and set him in their midst, and said, Truly I say to you, Unless you are converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Therefore whoever shall humble himself like this little child, this one is the greater in the kingdom of Heaven."

[Matthew18:1-4MKJV].

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Chapter 15

THE GREATEST SERMON EVER PREACHED (OLD TESTAMENT)

(The Author of Life's Sermon of Sermons)

"Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said:

"Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? Or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? Or who laid the corner stone thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

"Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, and brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?

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"Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place; that it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it? It is turned as clay to the seal; and they stand as a garment.

"And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken. Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? Or hast thou walked in the search of the depth? Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? Or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?

"Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? Declare if thou knowest it all. Where is the way where light dwelleth? And as for darkness, where is the place thereof, that thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof?

"Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born? Or because the number of thy days is great?

Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?

"By what way is the light parted, which scattereth the east wind upon the earth? Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder; to cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man; to satisfy the desolate and waste

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ground; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?

"Hath the rain a father? Or who hath begotten the drops of dew? Out of whose womb came the ice? And the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it? The waters are hid as with a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen.

"Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? Or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons? Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? Canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?

"Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee? Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are? Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? Or who hath given understanding to the heart?

"Who can number the clouds in wisdom? Or who can stay the bottles of heaven, When the dust groweth into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together? Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion? Or fill the appetite of the young lions, When they couch in their dens, and abide in the covert to lie in wait?

"Who provideth for the raven his food? When his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat. Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? Or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve? Canst

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thou number the months that they fulfil? Or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?

"They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows. Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn; they go forth, and return not unto them. Who hath sent out the wild ass free? Or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?

"Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings. He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing.

"Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib? Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? Or will he harrow the valleys after thee? Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great? Or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?

"Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather it into thy barn? Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks? Or wings and feathers unto the ostrich? Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in dust, And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them.

"She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers: her labour is in vain without fear; because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding. What time she lifteth up

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herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider.

"Hast thou given the horse strength? Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? The glory of his nostrils is terrible. He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men.

"He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword. The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet.

"He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting. Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south? Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high? She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place. From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off. Her young ones also suck up blood: and where the slain are, there is she.

Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said:

"Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? He that reproveth God, let him answer it."

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Then Job answered the LORD, and said:

"Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further."

Then answered the LORD unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said:

"Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?

"Hast thou an arm like God? Or canst thou thunder with a voice like him? Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty. Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one that is proud, and abase him.

"Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in secret. Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.

"Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee; he eateth grass as an ox. Lo now, his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly. He moveth his tail like a cedar: the sinews of his stones are wrapped together.

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"His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are like bars of iron. He is the chief of the ways of God: he that made him can make his sword to approach unto him. Surely the mountains bring him forth food, where all the beasts of the field play.

"He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed, and fens. The shady trees cover him with their shadow; the willows of the brook compass him about. Behold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth.

"He taketh it with his eyes: his nose pierceth through snares. Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook? Or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down? Canst thou put an hook into his nose? Or bore his jaw through with a thorn?

"Will he make many supplications unto thee? Will he speak soft words unto thee? Will he make a covenant with thee? Wilt thou take him for a servant for ever? Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?

"Shall the companions make a banquet of him? Shall they part him among the merchants? Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? Or his head with fish spears? Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more.

"Behold, the hope of him is in vain: shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him? None is so fierce that dare stir him up: who then is able to stand before me? Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him?

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Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine.

"I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion. Who can discover the face of his garment? Or who can come to him with his double bridle? Who can open the doors of his face? His teeth are terrible round about.

"His scales are his pride, shut up together as with a close seal. One is so near to another, that no air can come between them. They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be sundered.

"By his sneesings a light doth shine, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning. Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out. Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething pot or caldron.

"His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth. In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow is turned into joy before him. The flakes of his flesh are joined together: they are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved.

"His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone. When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: by reason of breakings they purify themselves. The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon.

"He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood. The arrow cannot make him flee: slingstones are turned with him into

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stubble. Darts are counted as stubble: he laugheth at the shaking of a spear.

"Sharp stones are under him: he spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire. He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment. He maketh a path to shine after him; one would think the deep to be hoary.

"Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear. He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride."

[Job38:1 > Job 41:34KJV].

Job answered the Lord and said:

"I know that You can do all, and not any purpose is withheld from You. Who is he who hides counsel without knowledge? Therefore I have spoken what I did not understand; things too wonderful for me; yea, I did not know. Hear, I beseech You, and I will speak; I will ask You, and You will cause me to know. I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye has seen You. Therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

[Job42:1-6MKJV].

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Chapter 16

THE GREATEST SERMON EVER PREACHED: NEW TESTAMENT

(The Prince of Preacher's Sermon that transformed the World)

"And seeing the multitudes, he [JESUS OF NAZARETH] went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him. And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying:

1. **The Beatitudes.**

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

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Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

[Matthew5:2-12MKJV].

2. **Salt and Light.**

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

[Matthew5:13-16MKJV].

3. **Christ Came to Fulfil the Law.**

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“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

[Matthew5:17-20MKJV].

4. **Anger.**

“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

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Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."

[Matthew5:21-26MKJV].

5. **Lust.**

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."

[Matthew5:27-29MKJV].

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6. **Divorce.**

"It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery".

[Matthew5:31-32KJV].

7. **Oaths.**

"Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

[Matthew5:33-37KJV].

8. **Retaliation.**

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

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But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also.

And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away."

[Matthew5:38-42KJV].

9. **Love Your Enemies.**

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?

And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

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Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly."

[Matthew5:43-Matthew6:4KJV].

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10. **The Lord's Prayer.**

"And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."
[Matthew6:5-15KJV].

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11. **Fasting.**

"Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."

[Matthew6:16-18KJV].

12. **Lay Up Treasures in Heaven.**

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he

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will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

[Matthew6:19-24KJV].

13. **Do Not Be Anxious.**

"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

"Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? Or, What shall we drink? Or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

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But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

14. **Judge not, that ye be not judged.**

"For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

[Matthew6:25-Matthew7:1-6KJV].

15. **Ask, and It Will Be Given.**

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

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For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

[Matthew7:7-11KJV].

16. **The Golden Rule.**

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

[Matthew7:12-14KJV].

17. **A Tree and Its Fruit.**

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

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Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.
A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.
Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.
Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."
[Matthew7:15-20KJV].

18. **I Never Knew You.**

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.
Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?
And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
[Matthew7:21-23KJV].

19. **Build Your House on the Rock.**

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:
And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.
And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto

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a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."

[Matthew7:24-27KJV].

> *"And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."*
>
> [Matthew7:28-7:29MKJV].

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Chapter 17

BECAUSE THE BIBLE SAYS SO

(Affirming the Authority of the Bible)

1. **How do we know that God created the Heavens and the Earth?** Because the Bible says so!

> *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."*
>
> [Genesis1:1MKJV].

2. **How do we know that Adam & Eve were the first two humans ever?** Because the Bible says so!

> *"Jehovah God made the rib (which He had taken from the man) into a woman. And He brought her to the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called Woman because she was taken out of man."*
>
> [Genesis2:22-23MKJV].

3. **How do we know that the thoughts and ways of God are too high for humans to grasp or understand?** Because the Bible says so!

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> *"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways, says Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."*
>
> [Isaiah55:8-9MKJV].

4. **How do we know that nothing will be impossible for God?** Because the Bible says so!

> *"And Job answered Jehovah and said, I know that You can do all, and not any purpose is withheld from You."*
>
> [Job42:1-2MKJV].

5. **How do we know that God ('YHWH', 'Jehovah') wants all people to make their peace with Him irrespective of race, age, gender, socio-economic status & current political, cultural & religious orientation?** Because the Bible says so!

> *"Come now, and let us reason together, says Jehovah; though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of Jehovah has spoken. ... "*
>
> [Isaiah1:18-20MKJV].

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6. **How do we know that the only way for people to make their peace with God is through Jesus Christ?** Because the Bible says so!

> *"Jesus said to him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father but by Me."*
> [John14:6MKJV].

7. **How do we know that we can trust Jesus Christ to save sinners?** Because the Bible says so!

> *"Faithful is the Word and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners ..."*
> [1Timothy1:15aMKJV].

8. **How do we know that we can have Eternal Life through faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour of the world?** Because the Bible says so!

> *"Jesus said to her, I am the Resurrection and the Life! He who believes in Me, though he die, yet he shall live."*
> [John11:25MKJV].

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PART TWO:

FAITH

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Chapter 18

QUESTIONS SCIENCE CANNOT ANSWER

(Science is not God)

1. **Scientism has Failed.** It has become evident that *Scientism* (i.e., the notion that pure natural Science is the ultimate answer to every challenge and problem mankind faces or ever will face) has failed. As mentioned earlier, there are questions Science still cannot answer:

1.1 **WHERE do we come from?** Science has no idea where we come from, and to make up some semblance of an 'intelligent' answer, it has invented the myths that we came from 'the Big Bang' or that humans share a 'common ancestor' with the primates (as if that explains where we come from).

Incidentally, humans and primates are anatomically similar in some respects because they share a common (mutual) Creator, not a common ancestor; and, rejecting the virgin birth of Jesus Christ outright they have finally instead settled for the accidental, random and purposeless 'virgin birth' of the Cosmos with 'nothing'* out of 'nowhere' through the brainless process of 'Evolution'.

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*Stephen Hawking: *'The Theory of Nothing'*

1.2 **WHY are we here?** Science still has no idea why we are here, so it thinks that we are here *'by the random accident & coincidence of Evolution'* (very convenient, as if that explains where we & 'Evolution' came from). Their answer anyway again only attempts to explain *where we have come from* and not *why we are here* (our purpose as card-carrying members of the human race etc.).

1.3 **WHAT is our purpose?** Science has no idea what our purpose is, so in order to produce some semblance of a cohesive answer, it has concluded that mankind's purpose apparently is to *'evolve' through 'natural selection', 'adaptation', speciation', 'punctuated equilibrium' and 'Lamarckism'* to hopefully eventually *'survive'* while fighting *'carbon emissions', 'global warming'* and *'Big Pharma hegemony'.*

1.4 **WHERE are we going?** Science has no idea where we are going, so it has apparently concluded that the human race has no choice but to emigrate to the Moon and/or the planet Mars where people will live happily ever after in a climate & atmosphere controlled, oxygen rich super-dome bubble.

This, they must still discover, is going to be quite problematic because neither the Moon nor Mars has an ocean of any kind for them to dump their sewage, used tissues, garbage,

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plastic bags & bottles and fishing lines in. After having messed up planet earth beyond remedy we now must take to space to raid other planets for us to mess up ecologically as an incorrigible alien invasion force from Cape Kennedy.

1.5 **What are the secrets of the COSMOS?** To date Science (by its own admission) only knows about 5% of what is going on in the Cosmos; the rest (95%) is made up of what Science refers to as *'undetectable by astronomical instruments dark matter + dark energy'.* Science has also conceded that it only knows about 10% (worst case scenario) or 20% (best case scenario) of what is going on in the world's oceans with the rest of the 90% or 80% still unmapped and researched territory.

Now isn't that a comforting thought (!): They want to go to Mars with their flimsy preponderance of knowledge (about the Universe) of only 5% (?) … what dangers may there lurk waiting for them in the 95% of *'dark matter + dark energy'* that they still know nothing about?

1.6 **Is there LIFE after death?** Scientists from the Atheism school of thought 'believe'* in death-after-death, not LIFE-after-death. One would have thought that, after 'billions of years' of progressive 'stellar evolution' and 'millions of years' of progressive biological evolution on earth ('Darwinism'), 'Evolution'

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would have gotten it right by now, but as things stand the *human mortality rate still stands at 100% for every generation in every nation on earth …* when will they ever get it right?

*'believe': A *faith-based religious* term and not a *scientific-method based scientific* term.

1.7 **Is there HOPE for man?** Secular humanist *(Atheism) driven Science* has given up all hope for man. Currently (at best) it promises only three grand things:

(i) a 100% mortality rate for all generations for all nations.

(ii) death-after-death and

(iii) a membership card from your nearest Secular Humanist Society.

(Be honest … why would anyone in his right mind join a club with such a dismal and morbid 'ABOUT US' website introduction to the movement?).

1.8 **How can we know the difference between RIGHT and WRONG?** In an age of a flourishing 'Secular Humanism' (the civilised word for 'Paganism') many have lost their way, moral compass and ethical gravitas to the whims and fancies of 'moral relativism', 'situational ethics', 'freethought',

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‘consequentialism’, ‘rationalism’, ‘reason’, ‘higher criticism’, ‘religious syncretism’, ‘postmodernism’ and plain old unbridled ‘Atheism’. Experience have shown that there are as many opinions and worldviews among the members of this movement as there are different colours of lipstick, or models of cellphones.

The point is that Science does not know the answer to this question because Science (from the paganistic ‘Humanist’ perspective), rejects the Bible outright as ancient and obsolete, redundant and useless collection of Jewish myths, traditions and folklore. This makes for an interesting situation, for instance where the average ‘secular humanist’:

- will insist that he does not believe in an Intelligent Designer (Creator) but nevertheless and notwithstanding still will adamantly refer to the Universe (in publications, debates, lectures etc.) as the ‘Cosmos’ (an orderly, intelligently designed whole) instead of the ‘Chaos’ (a confused, disorderly mix) in which he actually believes.

- will insist that the *Commandments of Moses from the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament* (‘Jesus Christ concealed’) and the teachings of *Jesus of Nazareth (the Christ) from the New Testament* (‘Jesus Christ revealed’) are obsolete and of no practical use in this modern, technologically

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advanced society while at the same time, should a thief ever have the audacity to steal his expensive Rolex or rip him off in a Ponzi scheme, he will (in the case of the stolen Rolex) go directly to the police station to submit a sworn statement of the event (while shouting all kinds of abuse at the 'slow reaction' of the police); also, to get a claim number for insurance purposes.

In the event of the Ponzi rip-off, he will call his lawyer, shout blue murder over the phone and lay charges of fraud against the perpetrator. Magically, as if some by some mysterious witch's brew or diabolical warlock's alchemy, it will suddenly dawn on him (in spite of decades of meetings and training workshops at his nearest *Secular Humanist Society)* that somehow *stealing* is, after all, still wrong.

- will insist that the Bible, and specifically the *Genesis Creation Account* (only a few thousand years old) is 'ancient', 'unreliable' and not worth applying his brilliant mind to; yet he will have the audacity to stand up before God, the angels and 7 billion people on earth to submit his evidence ('empirical proof' based on the 'scientific method') that the 'Cosmos' (not the chaos, mind you) is '13.8 billion years' old … evidence that is both *unverifiable* as well as *unfalsifiable.* (There are no time machines for the skeptic to travel that far back in time to go and verify the

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extravagant claims of the secular humanist about the age of the 'Cosmos').

- will present fossils and geological-strata 'empirical evidence' based on the 'scientific method' to the effect that the earth is '4.54 billion years old' while he should know that there is no way the skeptic can go back that far in time to go and check all his outrageous claims about the age of the earth ... evidence that is both *unverifiable* and *falsifiable* by the skeptic.

[Do the math: 'Evidence' that is both *unverifiable and unfalsifiable* and then presented as proof for an argument or position is not 'empirical evidence' ... it is useless conjecture; yet, while his so-called 'empirical evidence' spans time-frames from anything between 4.54 billion years to 13.8 billion years, he still has the gall to say that the Bible (only *a few thousand years* old) is 'ancient and unreliable evidence for God'!].

2. **What the Gospel of Jesus Christ teaches.**

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

[John11:25-26KJV].

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"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

[John3:16-17KJV].

"The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

[John3:35-36KJV].

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

[Romans6:23KJV].

"I [JESUS] am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city … I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star … And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

[Revelation22:13-14,16-17KJV].

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Chapter 19

NATURE ABHORS A VACUUM

(Only God can fill that 'God-shaped' emptiness in your heart)

1. **'Horror Vacui'.** It was Aristotle (384B.C. – 322 B.C.) **w**ho has said, *"Nature abhors a vacuum!"* Some interesting notes about the so-called 'vacuum' in Nature:

1.1. Nature truly abhors (hates) a vacuum ('Horror vacui', Aristotle).
1.2 Scientists tell us that there is no such a thing 'perfect vacuum'. It is 'idealised', but 'never realised'.

2. J**oseph Silk.** Joseph Silk writes.

"The quantum theory asserts that a vacuum, even the most perfect vacuum devoid of any matter, is not really empty. Rather the quantum vacuum can be depicted as a sea of continuously appearing and disappearing [pairs of] particles that manifest themselves in the apparent jostling of particles that is quite distinct from their thermal motions. These particles are 'virtual', as opposed to real, particles … At any given instant, the vacuum is full of such virtual pairs, which leave their signature behind, by affecting the energy levels of atoms." (Silk: 62).

[FactMyth: *'Nature Abhors a Vacuum'.* Online 2021].

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3. **Thomas DeMichele.** Thomas DeMichele writes:

"Like absolute zero in temperature, a perfect vacuum is attainable only in principle. It is a philosophical idealization; it can be approached, but never actually realized."

[FactMyth: *'Nature Abhors a Vacuum'.* Online 2021].

4. **Blaise Pascal.** The French scientist, Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), has also become famous for these words:

"There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of each man which cannot be satisfied by any created thing but only by God the Creator, made known through Jesus Christ."

[Good Reads: Blaise Pascal Quotes].

5. **Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ.** To judge from the behaviour of humankind in general and the problems and challenges faced by people every day, it is quite clear that there is (as Pascal has said) *'a God-shaped vacuum'* in the heart of every man and woman which cannot be satisfied by any created thing but only by God the Creator. Addressing the woman at 'Jacob's Well', Jesus said:

"Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

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[John 4:13b-14KJV].

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Chapter 20

IN DEFENCE OF ABSOLUTE TRUTH

(“There is no such thing as ‘Absolute Truth’ … except for the absolute truth of Atheism!”)

[Atheist]

1. **Discussion.** *“There is no such thing as ‘Absolute Truth’”* will surely go down in history as one the favourite mantras of the atheist, agnostic, pagan, skeptic and secular humanist of the 21st century; it is one of those surreptitious ways in which to say that there is no God (i.e., no Intelligent Designer or Omnipotent Creator considered by Christians as the epitome of ‘Absolute Truth’).

Is it, however, really true? Do the math: If there were no such thing as ‘Absolute Truth’, then the speaker himself would not really be speaking the absolute truth, would he? Furthermore, if the speaker was not telling the ‘Absolute Truth’, then he was, for all intents and purposes, lying and, if lying, his assertion, *“There is no such thing as ‘Absolute Truth’”* would be wrong (untrue) and could not hold. Half-a-truth is the same as half-a-lie.

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The consequence of this discovery i.e., that his assertion about the merit of 'Absolute Truth' was wrong or false would mean that there is such a thing as 'Absolute Truth' after all. In the final analysis we are thus confronted with one mammoth moral dilemma for the atheist to contend with, explain or justify to the world:

How is it ideologically possible for the atheist (or 'secular humanist') to live with the philosophical anomaly where the atheist insists that there is no such thing as 'Absolute Truth', and, at the same time insist that 'Atheism' as an ideology is absolutely true? The term 'Atheist' will thus of necessity have to be redefined as, *"A person who believes that there is no such thing as 'Absolute Truth' except for the 'absolute truth' of Atheism!"*

2. **Conclusion.** Were the statement, *"There is no such thing as Absolute Truth!":*

- true, then we would anyway be back at 'square one' ('Absolute Truth') because the speaker would by his own admission be lying and there would be 'Absolute Truth' after all.

- false (untrue), we would also obviously be back at 'square one' ('Absolute Truth') again because the speaker has been lying all the time in the first place.

It stands to reason that truth should always be 'absolute' by default, otherwise it would not

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constitute truth in the first place. In His great wisdom God has ensured that the abovementioned statement (*“There is no such thing as Absolute Truth!”)* in the mouth of any speaker (albeit theist or atheist) will always be auto destructive in each case … ABSOLUTE TRUTH shall, in other words, prevail in each case.

Jesus Christ has said:

> *“To this end I was born, and for this cause I came into the world, that I should bear witness to the TRUTH. Everyone who is of the TRUTH hears My voice.”*
>
> [John18:37bMKJV].

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Chapter 21

A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH

(“Death is not the end of Living; it’s the end of Dying!”)

[Charles Spurgeon, 1834-1892]

1. **Death the end of Dying.** Charles Spurgeon has reportedly said*, “Death is not the end of living; it is the end of dying!”*

To be honest, in comparison with Eternity life, as we know it, is no more than a blip on the Cosmic screen; the short little hyphen between the two dates of birth and death on the tombstone before Eternity begins. So, what is life (and death) all about? Why all the suffering, the injustice, the unfairness, the brutality and evil? Why all the worry, heartbreak, disappointment and frustration? Well, many fine books have been written on the topic, and I don’t propose to improve on those; just to add some notes in passing.

2. **A broken Universe.** We live in a broken Universe where life on earth is just a peek

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preview of what is to come in Eternity; our position in Eternity probably will be commensurate with the moral choices we have made in this life during this preview, i.e., the decision to either accept or reject Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour of our life.

3. **Injustice & Unfairness.** The unfairness, injustice, brutality and evil on earth are allowed to help us as free moral agents created in the image of God (the Absolute, Infinite & Ultimate Free Moral Agent) to understand, recognise and discern the critical differences and consequences following choices between good and evil, light and darkness, kindness and brutality.

4. **The Fall of Man (humanly speaking).** Humanly speaking, life is hard, painful, brutal and unfair because of the fall of man in Eden and the 'nuclear fallout' following that fall i.e., war, crime, natural disasters, pandemics, epidemics & disease; accidents of all kinds, human frailty and misfortune etc.

5. **Divinely Speaking.** Divinely speaking, however, it all has a higher Cosmic Purpose. God the Father lives in a magnificent *House of Many Mansions* and life on earth serves to prepare believers to enter that majestic palace one day with appreciation and respect for the One, *Jesus Christ,* who has made that privilege possible by

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His vicarious death on the cross for the sins of the world.

6. **Why we must know Suffering.** How on earth would anyone ever be capable of appreciating the unfairness, injustice, excruciating pain, brutality, humiliation and insults that Jesus Christ, the *Prince of Life*, has had to suffer on our behalf had we not at one time or another here on earth also known some measure of unfairness, injustice, excruciating pain, brutality, humiliation and insults ourselves?

7. **Why we must know Death.** How will we, in Eternity and in the Father's *House of Many Mansions,* ever appreciate the fact that Jesus Christ has died for our sins unless we, as in the case with suffering, had never died ourselves? We would probably never be able to fellowship with His immense sacrifice fully and thoroughly had we never also suffered and died ourselves … that is what will create and forge the immortal spiritual DNA that will forever cement ourselves to Christ never to ever in all Eternity to forsake Him as our Saviour and Master to follow some apostate, rebellious angel into damnation.

No servant or disciple is greater than his master. If 'they' did it to the green wood (the Master) how much more will they not spare the dry wood (servants and disciples)? Jesus has said:

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“For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?”

[Luke23:31MKJV].

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Chapter 22

BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD

(The Awesome One who, out of nothing, calls the things which do not exist as though they exist)

1. **Proposition #1. A recommended Bible study.** God is the *Ultimate Authority* in the Universe; He is the *Absolute & Infinite Creator* who, when He wanted to swear by an authoritative Name, He has had to swear by Himself.

[Isaiah45:23; Jeremiah22:5; Hebrews6:15-20].

2. **Proposition #2. God's ways & thoughts.** God's ways and thoughts are infinitely higher and more exalted than anything man is capable of. For lack of a better description, I insist that God has an (assumed) I.Q. of *Infinity to the power of Infinity, or INFINITY*^{infinity}.

Philosophers may, on the other hand, prefer to refer to Him as *'Mysterium Tremendum', 'Mysterium Fascinosum, or 'Mysterium et Fascinans':*

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2.1 *Mysterium Tremendum.* 'Mystery that repels'.

2.2 *Mysterium Fascinosum.* 'Mystery that attracts'.

2.3 *Mysterium Tremendum et Fascinans.* 'Mystery before which humanity both trembles and is fascinated'. [Britannica.com].

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

[Isaiah55:8-9KJV].

Bear in mind that, were we able to wrap our minds around the fullness of the Persona and Fabric of who and what God was, He would no longer be 'God'; worse still, in such a scenario we will have been transformed into 'God'. Let's get over it: Only a Deity of the stature and gravitas of the YHWH of Moses and Mount Sinai will ever have the stature and gravitas to fully understand the Persona and Fabric of who and what God is. Finite minds will never comprehend the One & Only Infinite Mind.

3. **Proposition #3. Highest of Heavens.** The highest of heavens, yes, even the heaven of heavens, cannot contain God, demonstrating the futility of trying to prove either the existence or non-existence of God by searching for Him in 'outer space'; as mentioned before, one will not

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find Henry Ford in the engine compartment of a Ford automobile.

[2Chronicles2:6; 1King8:27].

4. **Proposition #4. Chief Justice.** God the Father is the *Chief Justice* in *Heaven's Courts of Absolute & Infinite Justice.* The only avenue of appeal to the *Chief Justice* is to appeal to God through *Jesus Christ, the Son of God*.

Jesus Christ, however, will be the presiding acting Chief Justice at the *Great White Throne Judgment* in Eternity.

[Matthew3:17; 11:27; 19:28; John3:35; 5:22; 14:6].

5. **Proposition #5. God's power. G**od is powerful, big and small enough to (i) number and name all the stars in the Universe and to (ii) fix each and every broken heart in the Cosmos.

[Psalm147:3-4].

6. **Proposition #6. God's dwelling place.** God's primary dwelling place is known as the *'The Father's House of Many Mansions'* probably situated in what the Apostle Paul referred to as *'Paradise' or* the *'Third Heaven'.*

[John14:1-4; 2Corinthians12:2-4].

God also dwells with the *contrite and humble in spirit* [Isaiah57:15]. God's *Holy Spirit* also dwells in the bodies (hearts) of believers.

[1Corinthians3:16-17; 6:19].

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7. **Proposition #7. The Depth of God.** The Persona of God is Absolutely & Infinitely deep and complex, so much so that even the *Spirit of God 'searches (investigates) the deep (mysterious) things of God'.*

[1Corinthians2:10].

8. **Proposition #8. God's humility.** God is humble of Heart.

[Isaiah57:15; Zechariah9:9; Matthew11:28-29].

9. **Proposition #9. God's capabilities.** God is powerful and gifted enough to e.g., call solid matter out of nothing.

[Genesis1:1; Romans4:17].

10. **Proposition #10. The God omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent.**

[Job36:5; Psalm147:5; Proverbs3:19; Revelation1:8; 19:15].

The atheist that thus purports to prove that there is no God will have to:

- be present everywhere in the Universe all at the same time.
- at the same time, know everything there is to know about the Universe; and
- himself be 'almighty' enough to travel every square millimetre of the Universe

expeditiously at the same instant to accomplish his ambitious mission.

11. **Proposition #11. Secret vs. Revealed things.** In this Cosmos (and beyond) there are 'secret things' and 'revealed things'. The Bible says:

> *"The secret things belong to Jehovah our God, but the revealed things belong to us and to our sons forever, so that we may do all the words of this Law."*
>
> [Deuteronomy29:29].

The *'secret things'* belong to God, so let's get over it.

12. **Proposition #12. The ultimate irony.** As mentioned before, the ultimate irony is thus that only God Himself is in every conceivable way equipped with the scientific gravitas, stature, knowledge, wisdom, power and authority to ever prove there is 'no God' and *that* He will never do … an Eagle of His kind does not jump into a cage of its own accord.

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Chapter 23

FAITH LIKE A CHILD

(God resists the Proud but gives grace to the Humble)

1. **Random & Accidental 'Evolution'.** Atheists are known for the outlandish ideas they entertain on how the world purportedly (miraculously, randomly and by sheer serendipitous accident) has emerged out of the blue 'billions of years ago' without the help, assistance or intervention of a Creator, Supreme Being or Intelligent Designer of any kind.

2. **A Created Cosmos.** The central message of the Bible is that God (the YHWH or 'I Am' of Moses & Mt. Sinai) has created the Heaven and Earth, humanity and the animal and plant kingdoms; and, that He has given His only begotten Son, Jesus of Nazareth (the Christ) as a sacrifice for the sins of the world e.g.:

> "*The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."*
>
> [Job33:4KJV].

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"By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth."

[Psalm33:6KJV].

"Ye are blessed of the LORD which made heaven and earth."

[Psalm 115:15KJV].

3. **Searching the mysteries of the Universe.** Atheists will spend hours, even years (without God or the Bible) trying to figure out the mysteries of the Cosmos; it reminds me of a complete (adult) novice playing with Professor Rubik's famous cube and spending hours on end trying just about every trick in the book to arrive at the solution, but to no avail and eventually only to capitulate to give it up for a bad job. Then, along comes a 10-year-old with freckles, wires in his teeth and a baseball cap on his head (put on backwards) only to solve the problem within a matter of minutes!

4. **Faith unlocks understanding.** Faith unlocks understanding, and all the sceptics and atheists have to do is to, like a little child, kneel at the feet of the YHWH (Jehovah) of Mt. Sinai and confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Saviour of the world for the Light of Truth to also dawn for them.

"The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a

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Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret."

[Daniel 2:47KJV].

"And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel."

[Isaiah45:3KJV].

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:"

[Matthew6:19-20KJV].

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Chapter 24

WHY GOD IS INVISIBLE

(Eternal, Immortal, Invisible)

1. **The Invisibility of God.** Why can't we 'see' God; is He spiteful, or are we just plain stupid? Why does God have to be invisible? When we understand the nature of God, the reasons for His so-called 'invisibility' becomes clearer. Some notes:

1.1 **God is ETERNAL.**

"For all things were created in Him, the things in the heavens, and the things on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created through Him and for Him … Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."
[Colossians1:16; 1Timothy1:17MKJV].

1.2 **God Is IMMORTAL.**

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal …"
[1Timothy1:17b; Colossians1:16-17MKJV].

1.3 **God is a SPIRIT.**

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“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

[John4:24KJV].

"For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you ... But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you."

[Matthew10:20; 12:28MKJV].

"The Spirit of the Lord is on Me; because of this He has anointed Me to proclaim the Gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim deliverance to the captives, and new sight to the blind, to set at liberty those having been crushed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

[Luke4:18-19MKJV].

1.4 **God lives in impenetrable LIGHT.**

“Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see ... “

[1Timothy6:16aKJV].

1.5 **Man would DIE were He to see God.** When Moses wanted to ‘see’ God *("Show me your glory!")* this was the reply He received:

“And he [God] said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.”

[Exodus33:20KJV].

1.6 **Humans are neither OMNIPOTENT, or OMNISCIENT nor OMNIPRESENT.** To be able to ‘see’ God, humans would have to be *(i)*

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almighty, (ii) know everything there is to know and be *(iii) present in the entire Cosmos (including Heaven) … all at the same time!*

"Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly: How much less in them [HUMANS] that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth? They are destroyed from morning to evening: they perish for ever without any regarding it.

[Job4:18-20KJV].

1.7 **God is an UNCREATED Spirit.** Whereas humans are created beings, God is an uncreated Spirit with no original cause. He just 'IS'. He told Moses:

"And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM …"
[Exodus3:14KJV].

Jesus Christ has said:

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, the First and the Last."
[Revelation22:13KJV].

1.8 **Impaired VISION.** Humans suffer from impaired vision; compared to God we are as blind as the proverbial mole. On the *Electromagnetic Spectrum* God can see (comprehend, grasp) the entire Spectrum; our vision is limited to visible *'wavelengths of 380 to 700 nanometers'.*
[See paragraph 1.9: Isaiah55:8-9KJV].

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1.9 **Humans are SINFUL, IMPERFECT & MORTAL beings.** God is absolutely and infinitely HOLY & PERFECT. He says:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

[Isaiah55:8-9KJV].

Debriefing: Not only illustrates this text (i) the immensity of God's 'intellect' (mind) but also (ii) the fact of His children (Israel's) misalignment with His holy thoughts, ways and purposes.

2. **Will humans ever see God?** According to the Bible children of God will, at (i) the Second Coming as well as in (ii) Eternity see Jesus Christ, when God Himself will wipe the tears from their eyes. The Bible says:

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

[Revelation1:7KJV].

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

[Matthew5:8KJV].

"And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads."

[Revelation22:4KJV].

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“For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

[Revelation7:17KJV].

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”

[Revelation21:4KJV].

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Chapter 25

IT IS NO SECRET WHAT GOD CAN DO

(Three glorious miracles we should not resist)

1. **History-101 #1.** God has power over the solar system and planets; He once made the Sun to stand still for ‘almost a whole day’.

> *“Then Joshua spoke to Jehovah in the day when Jehovah delivered up the Amorites before the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun! Stand still on Gibeon! And, moon, stand still in the valley of Aijalon! And the sun stood still, and the moon stood still, until the people had avenged themselves on their enemies. Is this not written in the Book of Jasher? And the sun stood still in the midst of the heavens, and did not hasten to go down about a whole day.”*
>
> [Joshua10:12-13MKJV].

2. **History-101 #2.** God once made the ‘shadow’ to move backwards (for Hezekiah) on Ahaz’ sundial by ten degrees (10°).

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"And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees? And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz."

[2Kings20:9-11KJV].

3. **History-101 #3.** God once made a woodsman's axe (borrowed) that had fallen into the river Jordan float on water.

"So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood. But as one was felling a beam, the axe head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, master! For it was borrowed. And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he shewed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it in thither; and the iron did swim. Therefore said he, Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it."

[2Kings6:4-7KJV].

4. **History-101 #4.** God once parted the Red Sea for the children of Israel to pass through unscathed in their flight from Egypt.

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore cries' thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it:

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and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

"And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.

"And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

"And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon

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their horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

"And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them. But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left."

[Exodus14:15-29KJV].

5. **Conclusion.** I have mentioned these miracles only in passing; it is by no means an exhaustive list. The point I want to make is that, over and above such miracles as already mentioned, God also can do the *three most blessed miracles* anyone could ever want or would pursue:

5.1 **Miracle #1: God can forgive sin.** In order to demonstrate His power, authority and mandate to forgive sin, the Father had Jesus Christ, the Son of God say:

"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house."

[Matthew9:6KJV].

5.2 **Miracle #2: God can heal broken hearts.** In order to demonstrate His power,

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authority and mandate to heal broken hearts, God made the psalmist to write to the effect that God reckons the spectacular miracle of *(i) telling the number of stars and calling each one of them by name* on par with *(ii) healing a broken heart:*

"He heals the broken-hearted, and binds up their wounds. He appoints the number of the stars; He calls them all by their names."

[Psalm147:3-4MKJV].

5.3 **Miracle #3: God can arrange for you to live with Him forever in the 'Father's House of Many Mansions'.** To demonstrate His power, authority and mandate to arrange for you to live with Him forever, He had Jesus Christ invite you as follows:

" … ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you … I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

[John14:1-3KJV].

Accept this invitation from Jesus Christ still today … tomorrow may be just one day too late.

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Chapter 26

MORE FAITH

(The Journey from Faith to Knowledge)

1. **More Faith?** Like many other believers I also sometimes lament to be one of those *"O ye of little faith!"* types. Some notes on the issue of FAITH:

1.1 **Faith comes from 'hearing' the Word.** FAITH comes from hearing (hearing, reading, investing in) the Word of God.

The amount of FAITH will always be commensurate with the depth, weight and quality of time spent with the Word of God (BIBLE) and sorry, there are no shortcuts. For instance, you cannot pray for more faith; you must read the Bible, spent time with the Word of God. Besides, by the time you had decided to 'pray' for 'more faith' you have already demonstrated more than enough (more than a 'mustard seed') faith to go by anyway, otherwise you would not have wanted to pray in the first place.

People without faith in God either usually cannot or would not want to pray. So, you may already have sufficient faith, but instead of praying for more faith, should rather be

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praying for a love and passion for the Word of God.

1.2 **There will always be some 'doubt' in the mix.** True FAITH will always have an element of *doubt* in its equation. There is no such thing as '100% FAITH'; even the greatest prophet of them all, John the Baptist, while languishing on 'death row' in Herod's prison, at the time had doubts about the 'bona fides' of Jesus as the Messiah. The Bible says:

"Now when John [the Baptist] had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

[Matthew11:2-6KJV].

Incidentally, John the Baptist was later executed (beheaded) in prison by Herod; why didn't Jesus rescue him from prison? Probably because Jesus' Kingdom was not from here; had His Kingdom been from here, He probably would have rescued John the Baptist easily. Let's face it, many (if not most) of God's designs for the world are still hidden in shrouds of divine mystery.

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Bear also in mind that Jesus Christ was not (as so many erroneously think) a sworn pacifist. He told Pontius Pilate:

" ... My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

[John18:36bKJV].

In the end Jesus Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords, will eventually fight for His Kingdom.

"These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast [ANTICHRIST]. These shall make war with the Lamb [JESUS CHRIST], and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

[Revelation17:13-14].

1.3 **Speaking of 100% FAITH is a contradiction-in-terms.** There is no such thing as 100% FAITH; FAITH can only develop and increase to 99.99%, thereafter it will mature into knowledge.

Now, anyone can 'believe with knowledge' (i.e., after having 'seen'). The challenge is to believe without having 'seen'. Jesus has told Thomas:

"Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

[John20:29KJV].

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2. **The Good News.** It is possible to desire and pursue more FAITH until it leads to (spiritual) knowledge as the ideal.

For instance, after many gruelling hours of adversity, debilitating loss, indescribable suffering and anguish, the man Job, faith hero of the centuries, eventually arrived at that juncture on his spiritual journey where his formidable (but incomplete) 99.99% faith had 'morphed' into 100% certainty (knowledge):

"Job answered Jehovah and said, I KNOW that You can do all, and not any purpose is with-held from You ... I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye has SEEN You."

[Job42:1b,2,5MKJV].

Develop more faith by praying first and then, afterwards, reading the Bible in a structured, intelligent way, e.g., by starting from Psalm 1 through Psalm 150 over a period, or reading the Gospel of John and following it up with the New Testament Epistles. The Bible is a treasure trove of spiritual gems for the new convert to discover. Check Bible Study websites (including E-Sword.net and Bible Hub) for Bible-reading ideas and programmes.

But ... it is important to (i) pray first and (ii) afterwards spend time with the Bible, and the reason is obvious: Soon the reader will notice how God speaks to those who pray (i.e., those who believe that He IS and diligently seek Him in the secret of their 'closet') through Scripture ... it

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is simply incredible! Morning by morning new mercies you'll see.

Some time ago I was sitting at a table in the quiet hours of the early morning praying to God and asking Him where that verse in the Bible was that said that the eyes of God roamed the earth to see if anyone's mind was focused on Him; a few minutes later, when I turned to open my Bible to resume my structured Bible reading 'protocol' for that morning, there was the very verse in the Psalms right before my eyes … the first one for the day as part of that daily reading portion.

Forget about safaris through darkest Africa or 'hot-ballooning' over the icy Alps … the Christian's greatest and most exhilarating adventures are found in the secret of the (prayer) closet and the reading of the Bible.

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Chapter 27

ANATOMY OF A MIRACLE

(Miracles are supposed to be 'Impossible'!)

1. **Are miracles impossible?** The hackneyed phrase, *"Miracles are impossible!"* must surely be another one of the many sworn skeptic's favourite mantras.

The absurdity of this statement, however, can be easily refuted; I have seen too many miracles in my 74 years to believe otherwise. To say that *"Miracles are impossible'!"* is not only silly but also philosophically irrational, akin to saying, *Unlawful acts are illegal!"* Educated people should not say such juvenile things; it actually represents a gross insult to a Holy God.

2. **What a true miracle is not.** Bear in mind that, with the word 'miracle' (as Christians understand it) is not meant the sorcerer's 'magic', the circus illusionist's remarkable slight-of-hand on stage or the schoolboy's entertaining of partygoers with playing cards or junior chemistry sets.

True 'Biblical-era' miracles (that are still embarrassingly abundant today) may come for

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free, but they do not come cheaply; in fact, some may come only after years of tears or many gruelling hours of prayer. On the other hand, may some miracles sometimes again come surprisingly suddenly, unexpectedly:

> *"God moves in many a mysterious way His wonders to perform; He plants His footprint in the sea and rides upon the storm."*
> [William Cowper, 1731-1800].

3. **Ever Increasing faith.** Some notes on miracles:

3.1 Speaking in the 'human'* vernacular, miracles are *supposed* to be 'impossible' by default, which is why they are called 'miracles' in the first place.

Do the math: a 'possible miracle' would be a silly contradiction in terms; any event considered 'possible' would obviously never qualify as a 'miracle'. Strangely enough it is, by and large, often the most learned in society, i.e., the agnostic 'professors' and atheistic 'PhD's, who say these silly, unscientific and philosophically contradictory things.

(P.S. Just in passing: From God's point-of-view nothing is 'impossible').

> *"And Job answereth Jehovah and saith: Thou hast known that for all things Thou art able, And not withheld from Thee is any device ..."*

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[Job42:1-2KJV].

"But Jesus looked on them and said to them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

[Matthew19:26MKJV].

3.2 **The Laws of Nature.** Others might again say that the *Laws of Nature ('Physics')* prohibit such things as 'miracles' happening.

The truth is that the *Laws of Nature* are, on the contrary, a non-negotiable *prerequisite* for miracles to happen! Do the math: Without them how would the miracle ever happen (or will we ever know that a miracle had happened) considering the fact that a miracle is supposed to be in 'breach' of the *Laws of Nature?* How could an event ever be in 'breach' of the *Laws of Nature* if the *Laws of Nature* did not exist?

In any case would any event in such a world (i.e., where the *Laws of Nature* did not exist) technically always be '100% possible' so that no miracle in such a place could anyway ever happen, as a 'miracle' is supposed to be an 'impossibility' by default.

4. **The Atheist Gripe.** The atheists complain that they do not believe in God because they never 'see miracles'. To be honest, I have lost track counting the number of miracles in my life, and I am not even 'famous' or 'important'. To 'see miracles', however, one must:

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- have faith, because without faith it is impossible to please God (and here is a real 'impossibility' for you).

- believe that God 'IS' (i.e., that He EXISTS).

- diligently seek God.

To see miracles, one would first have to meet and know the Miracle Maker. The Bible says that God only will only reward those who believe that He exists and diligently seek Him:

> *"But without faith it is impossible to please him [GOD]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."*
>
> [Hebrews11:6MKJV].

5. **Logic vs logic.** Just about the only real 'impossibility' is the atheist's 'Catch-22' predicament of trying to see miracles without faith. In the final analysis it all boils down to a clash between the logic of the atheist versus the logic of the Word of God:

5.1 ATHEIST: *"I don't believe in God, and miracles are impossible!"*

5.2 THE WORD OF GOD: *"Without faith it is impossible to please God!"*

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Chapter 28

THE CHRISTIAN'S BLESSED HOPE!

(The wonder of the Hand of God's Grip, Leverage & Force)

1. **The Blessed Hope.** The Bible teaches:

> *"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."*
>
> [Titus2:13KJV].

This blessed hope is founded on the promise by Jesus Christ Himself:

> *"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."*
>
> [John14:1-3KJV].

2. **In the Kitchen.** Allow me to digress a while: Now, when in the kitchen one tries to open a

bottle by removing a tight-sitting lid, there are three things that must be applied for success, i.e., *Grip, Leverage & Force.*

2.1 GRIP: Using strong hands supplemented by some special device (lever, handle, tool or tacky piece of material etc.) specially designed for the purpose. The aim is to get a strong grip that will not slip (Super-grip, non-slip: We'll never open the lid with non-grip, super-slip).

2.2 LEVERAGE: Provided by the hand and arm and/or tool turning the lid in terms of Archimedes' 'Law of the Lever' and 'Centres of Mass' for the moving of 'loads' around a 'fulcrum'. Archimedes is reported to have said:

"Give me a lever long enough and a fulcrum to place it on and I will move the world."

2.3 FORCE: Applied by strong hands and arms (supported by a strong grip and suitable leverage) to open the lid.

3. **The Christians' Guarantee of the Blessed Hope.**

3.1 **GOD and Christ's Grips.** GOD and Jesus Christ's grips on their child are absolute and infinite. Where even Jesus might fail (if ever possible) the Father would anyway step in and save the day, because, Jesus said, *"The Father is greater than I."*

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"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

[John10:28-29KJV].

3.2 **GOD's Leverage.** GOD's leverage, as exemplified in the NAME of Jesus Christ, is absolute and infinite. The Name of Jesus Christ was the lever that, through the agency of the holy angel, rolled away the stone of the tomb during the resurrection and will also be the lever that will turn the wheel of Salvation for every believer who had ever put his or her faith in Jesus Christ. Referring to Jesus, the Apostle Peter says:

"This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

[Acts4:11-12KJV].

The Apostle John:

"And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

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"And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

"And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

"And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

[Revelation5:1-10KJV].

3.3 **GOD'S Force:** GOD's force in support of the Christian and the Church at large, as exemplified in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ, is absolute and infinite:

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

[Matthew28:18KJV].

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the

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prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

[Hebrews1:1-4KJV].

"I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."

[1Timothy6:13-16KJV].

4. **Conclusion.** The Christian, no matter how gifted and strong or weak and vulnerable, is supported and protected by the GRIPS, LEVERAGE and FORCE of God the Father and Jesus Christs authority and power and no one will pluck him or her from the Father and Jesus Christ's hands. The man Job, faith hero of the centuries, has so aptly and truthfully said:

"Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I

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> *know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."*
>
> [Job19:23-27KJV].

This is every Christian's blessed hope.

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Chapter 29

THE ANCHOR HOLDS!

(Will your anchor hold in the storms of life?)

1. **The Horror of Unintended Consequences.** The Bible says that the Devil is walking about as a 'roaring lion' the sheep of Christ to devour but, however, had he known what were later that day to transpire at *Calvary (Golgotha)* the forces of darkness would not have crucified Christ, illustrating the fact that our adversary is neither omnipotent nor omniscient and, at the time of the crucifixion, must have been as equally ignorant as the rest of the *'princes of this world':*

> *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."*
>
> [1 Peter5:8KJV].
>
> *"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."*
>
> [1Corinthians2:7-8KJV].

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2. **What the Death of Christ has accomplished.** If the DEATH of Jesus Christ was able to, i.e., for those who would put their faith in Him as Saviour, engineer their Eternal Salvation, what will His LIFE not be able to accomplish for them in Eternity to come? The Bible says:

> *"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."*
>
> [2Corinthians8:9KJV].

Today the Name, Person and Gospel of Jesus Christ is like an enormous ANCHOR of hope and security, holding the household of faith safely, securely together. The Bible says:

> *"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."*
>
> [1Peter1:18-19KJV].

3. **Growing up.** I committed my life to Jesus Christ in 1962 in a small church in the Orange Free State (South Africa) and, as 14-year-old teenager, have had to walk about 3 kilometres to church every Sunday morning and evening as well. One of the many songs that will always stay with me was this one by Priscilla J. Owens:

"Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,

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When the clouds unfold their wings of strife?
When the strong tides lift and the cables strain,
Will your anchor shift or firm remain?

***Cho**. We have an anchor that keeps the soul*
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll,
Fastened to the Rock which cannot move,
Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love."

4. **The Anchor holds!** This Anchor, i.e., the Gospel of Jesus Christ, has been holding ever since it was hinted at prophetically in Genesis through the Old Testament (the Hebrew Bible) and for the past 2021 years, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!

> *"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel … And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."*
> [Genesis3:15; Matthew16:18KJV].

The song goes:

The Anchor holds,
Though the ship's been battered;
The anchor holds,
Though the sails are torn!
I have fallen on my knees,
As I face life's raging seas;
The anchor holds …
In spite of the storm!

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(Lawrence Chewning & Ray Boltz; © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc.)

> *"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"*
>
> [John11:25-26KJV].
>
> *"But unto the Son [JESUS CHRIST] he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."*
>
> [Hebrews1:8KJV].

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1. Owens, Priscilla J. (1882) *We Have an Anchor.* Hymns of Glory/Songs of Praise. Online 2021.
2. Warner/Chappell Music, Inc. *The Anchor Holds.* Lawrence Chewning & Ray Boltz; © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc. Online 2021.

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Chapter 30

COME INTO THE ARK!

(There's a storm coming called 'God's Great Judgment Day'!)

1. **Answers in Genesis Ark-Exhibition.** When Ken Ham ('Answers in Genesis') opened his Ark-Exhibition on 7 July 2016, many rejoiced, but some (including those from the so-called 'Freedom from Religion Foundation') reportedly still scoffed.

These postmodernist geniuses failed to notice the irony … it was the ancient Noah phenomenon playing out all over again, a sure portend of things to come and a validation of the Biblical warning where Jesus has warned:

> *"But as the days of Noah, so also will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as they were in the days before the flood eating, and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah went in-to the ark. And they did not know until the flood came and took all away. So also will be the coming of the Son of Man."*
>
> [Matthew24:37-39HRB].

P.S. Today, the invitation still stands:

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"Come into the Ark and be saved ... tomorrow may be too late!"

2. **That Ark is the Name of JESUS CHRIST as presented in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.** The Apostle Peter says:

"Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

[Acts4:10-12KJV].

3. **Many still erroneously believe that Jesus Christ has come to condemn sinners to Hell.** That malicious rumour is not true. Jesus has said:

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but so that the world might be saved through Him."

[John 3:16-17MKJV].

4. **The Invitation still stands.**

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> *"Come to Me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke on you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest to your souls."*
> [Matthew11:28-29MKJV].

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2. Wikipedia. *Ark Encounter.* Online 2021.

Chapter 31

DISCRETION THE BETTER PART OF VALOUR

(Without faith it is impossible to please God)

1. **The Weirdness of Atheism.** When one stops to think about the dynamics and implications of *Atheism* as a religion ('belief-system') one stands amazed at the absurdity and weirdness of it, i.e., something that should rather have been the domain of the less informed citizenry of the

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world, has amazingly actually become the province of many of those at the vanguard of academia and scientific endeavour. The Apostle Paul was, apparently, not wholly unfamiliar with the phenomenon. He writes about the unbelievers of his day:

> *"For the invisible things of him [GOD] from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse … Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."*
>
> [Romans1:20,22KJV].

2. **The "God is dead!" mantra.** Scientifically speaking, this stance is particularly puzzling, as scientists by their own admission concede that they only know about 5% of what is going on in the Universe with the rest (95%) constituting *'undetectable by scientific instruments dark matter + dark energy';* they also concede that they know only about 10% to 20% of what is going on in our own oceans, hardly the kind of knowledge-base to establish an ideology as inexact and fuzzy as 'Atheism' upon … and with such an inordinate store of arrogance and confidence too.

3. **The "God is evil!" mantra.** How God can be both 'dead' and 'evil' at the same time boggles the mind; but I assume that, being as 'empirically' thorough as they usually are, the

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atheists nevertheless issue these types of imposing philosophical pronouncements with a considerable measure of scientific circumspection and academic judiciousness.

More disconcerting is the notion from certain atheistic quarters that *'there is no such thing as good or evil, only thinking that makes it so'* that appears to contradict the 'God is evil' notion. After all, were there really no such things as 'good' and 'evil', then why do atheists complain about the 'unfairness' (evil!) of prayer and Bible-readings in public schools?

Furthermore, any normal person incapable of liking, or at least respecting, Jesus of Nazareth (whether he worshipped Him or not) must have something seriously wrong with Him, and to call Him 'evil' must surely be the epitome of ignorance about the Bible and the character of the finest human being ('Son of Man'!) to have ever walked the earth.

4. **The "We cannot see God!" mantra.** Jesus Christ is very clear about this issue:

> *"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."*
>
> [Matthew5:8KJV].

This begs some valid questions:

4.1 Are God-hating and God-profaning atheists pure in heart?

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4.2 Is it not indeed possible for God to be obscured from their view and the observations of their scientific instruments in the 80% to 90% they still not know about the oceans of planet earth, or in the 95% they still do not yet know about the Cosmos?

4.3 Even had 100% of the Cosmos been 'visible' (observable) to the atheists, what makes them think they would detect God's presence even then even with the best of technologies in existence … one would not search for Henry Ford in the engine of a Ford automobile. I thus find it incredible that atheists can be so grossly deluded that they can think that they deserve an audience with God at all when even Moses, when he pleaded with God to see His glory, has had to be satisfied with only a fleeting glimpse of God's back parts while at the same time being cautioned by God that no man could see God and live:

"And Jehovah said to Moses, I will do this thing also that you have spoken. For you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name. And he said, I beseech You, let me see Your glory. And He said, I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of Jehovah before you. And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. And He said, You cannot see My face. For there no man can see Me and live. And Jehovah said, Behold! There is a place by Me, and you shall stand upon a rock. And it will be, while My glory

passes by, I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. And I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back parts. But My face shall not be seen.

[Exodus 33:18-23MKJV].

5. **The Better Part of Valour.** Should atheists refuse to repent and turn to God along familiar, traditional ways, it is recommended that atheists then (in the meantime) at least accept the veracity of the Bible and the existence of God in good faith until such a time the contrary is proved instead of accepting *Atheism* in blind faith until the contrary has been proved.

One of the most puzzling phenomena in the Universe is the atheist's refusal to believe in the existence of 'Absolute Truth' except the absolute truth of Atheism! The Apostle Paul has given some excellent advice in this regard:

" ... <u>without faith it is impossible to please him</u> [GOD]: for he that cometh to God must believe that <u>he is</u> [EXISTS], and that he [GOD] is <u>a rewarder of them that diligently seek him</u>."

[Hebrews11:6KJV].

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Chapter 32

FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

"... Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee..."

(John Donne, 1572-1631)

1. **Introduction.**

> *"For Whom the Bell Tolls is a novel by Ernest Hemingway published in 1940. It tells the story of Robert Jordan, a young American volunteer attached to a Republican guerrilla unit during the Spanish Civil War. As a dynamiter, he is assigned to blow up a bridge during an attack on the city of Segovia. It was published just after the end of the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), whose general lines were well known at the time."*
>
> [Wikipedia].

2. **Of Funerals & Farewells.** Some people live as if they are going to exist forever in their current life-form on this here blood, sweat and tear drenched earth, while the life of a man is as brief and short as the little 'hyphen' that separates his date-of-birth from his date-of-death on his tombstone. The Bible warns:

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> *"Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain? What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah."*
>
> [Psalm 89:47-48KJV].
>
> *"... And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."*
>
> [Hebrews9:27KJV].

While driving from Pretoria to Allanridge (South Africa) with my father-in-law to attend the funeral of a cousin of mine, I remarked to my father-in-law that the odd thing about funerals was that every man, in his lifetime, must attend only a certain number of funerals for his allotted tenure on earth until the day his own funeral, at last, comes up (i.e., 'when your number is up!').

My father-in-law then, courteously (and probably only to humour me for my outlandish logic) replied that it was quite an 'interesting' (meaning 'novel') way to look at funerals. I, however, had only mentioned it because it sounded so philosophically profound, perhaps to release the tension from the news of the death and funeral of my dear cousin who had had his feet amputated and at the time of his severe illness was suffering from all kinds of debilitating ailments, one of them being Parkinson's disease.

3. **The irony of the matter.** The irony of the matter was that that funeral was the last one my father-in-law, a devout Christian, ever attended; we buried him not long afterwards, i.e., on 9

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January 2013; and, two days later on 11 January 2013, we also buried my own father, who incidentally had surrendered his life to Christ on 1 October 2010 at the advanced age of 86.

> *"... Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee..."*
> [John Donne, 1572-1631].

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1. Wikipedia. *For Whom the Bell Tolls.* Online 2021.

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Chapter 33

GOD'S WONDERFUL BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

(God will not forget)

1. **Proposition #1.** God has a *'Book of Remembrance'* written before Him for those that fear the Lord and love to think upon His Name.

> *"Then those fearing Jehovah spoke together, each man to his neighbor. And Jehovah listened and heard. And a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who feared Jehovah, and for those esteeming His name. And they shall be Mine, says Jehovah of Hosts, for the day that I will make up My treasure. And I will pity them as a man has pity on his son who serves him. Then you shall again see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between him who serves God, and him who does not serve Him."*
>
> [Malachi3:16-18MKJV].

2. **Proposition #2.** Because God is omniscient and does not need reminding, it is immaterial whether this is an actual book the way we know it or a book that is only an 'archive' or some divine 'record' of some sorts metaphorically intended. Jesus often used metaphors* ('parables') in teaching. The fact is that this Book

will be a real book (irrespective of the format or appearance) and will be opened at the Great White Judgment Seat of Christ:

> *"And with many such parables He spoke the Word to them, as they were able to hear it."*
> [Mark4:33MKJV].

**Metaphor/Parable:* Jesus never lied and 'parables' should not be construed as having been metaphorical references to 'fictional' or 'imaginary' events or scenarios for illustration purposes only; parables were in all probability references to actual events as case-in-point examples.

3. **Proposition #3.** The fact that God has such a Book (i.e., the 'Book of Remembrance') is often mentioned in Scripture.

> *"And now will You forgive their sin! And if not, I pray You, blot me out of Your book which You have written."*
> [Exodus32:32MKJV].
> *"You number my wandering; O put my tears into Your bottle; are they not in Your Book? Let them be blotted out of the Book of Life, and not be written with the righteous."*
> [Psalm56:8, 69:28MKJV].
> *"A stream of fire went out and came out from before Him. A thousand thousands served Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The judgment was set, and the books were opened ... And at that time Michael shall stand up, the great ruler who stands for the sons of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation; until that*

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time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."

[Daniel 7:10; 12:1MKJV].

"And all dwelling on the earth will worship it, those whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain, from the foundation of the world. And if anyone was not found having been written in the Book of Life, he was cast into the Lake of Fire."

[Revelation13:8; 20:15MKJV].

4. **Proposition #4.** Loyalty to God and His servants will be rewarded.

"But lay up treasures in Heaven for yourselves, where neither moth nor rust corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal ... And whoever shall give to one of these little ones a cup of cold water to drink, only in the name of a disciple, truly I say to you, He shall in no way lose his reward."

[Matthew6:20; 10:42MKJV].

"For whoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, truly I say to you, He shall not lose his reward."

[Mark9:41MKJV].

"Rejoice in that day and leap for joy. For behold, your reward is great in Heaven. For so their fathers did according to these things to the prophets."

[Luke6:23MKJV].

"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to each according as his work is."

[Revelation22:12MKJV].

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"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive the things done through the body, according to that which he has done, whether good or bad."

[2Corinthians5:10MKJV].

5. **Proposition #5.** Loyalty (to God) even to the death has not been ruled out. Believers are admonished never to give up. The term 'to the death' does not necessarily always mean martyrdom but 'to the day of dying and departing to Eternity' from whatever cause. Come to think of it, loyalty to the cause of Christ may already be some form of martyrdom for many.

"Then they will deliver you up to be afflicted and will kill you. And you will be hated of all nations for My name's sake."

[Matthew24:9MKJV].

"For I will show him what great things he must suffer for My name's sake ... And at that time Herod the king threw on his hands to oppress some of those of the church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword."

[Acts9:16; 12:1-2MKJV].

"But we should not lose heart in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not faint."

[Galatians6:9MKJV].

6. **Proposition #6.** Because God is omniscient, He has the names of those who murmur against Him.

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> *"How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmurs against Me? I have heard the murmurings of the sons of Israel which they murmur against Me."*
>
> [Numbers14:27MKJV].
>
> *"And you murmured in your tents and said, Because Jehovah hates us, He has brought us forth out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us."*
>
> [Deuteronomy1:27MKJV].
>
> *"And they despised the pleasant land; they did not believe His Word, but murmured in their tents, and did not listen to the voice of Jehovah."*
>
> [Psalm106:24-25MKJV].

7. **Proposition #7.** The man Job is a good example of how God is pitiful and of tender mercy to those who are patiently trusting in Him. At the end of his trials, terrible suffering and debilitating losses God rewarded Job with double the wealth (assets) he has had before.

> *"Behold, we count blessed those who endure. You have heard of the patience of Job, and you have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is full of pity and of tender mercy."*
>
> [James5:11MKJV].

This reference to Job (by James) also lays to rest the erroneous theory that the man Job was a myth as part of Jewish folklore and did not exist.

8. **Proposition #8.** As regards those who today are ashamed of Jesus Christ and His teachings and who dismiss the *Book of Remembrance* as an

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irrelevant Jewish myth, fictional or anyway ancient and redundant, Jesus has warned:

> *“For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father’s, and of the holy angels.”*
>
> [Luke9:26MKJV].

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PART THREE: SALVATION

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Chapter 34

GOOD NEWS FOR GAMBLERS!

(How to go with the best odds)

1. **Mathematical Odds.** The mathematical odds against the chances of being dealt any of the following hands in a 5-card poker hand are given as follows:

- **'Royal Flush':** 649739 to 1 (chances for such a hand = 0.0082%%)

- **'Straight Flush':** 72192 to 1 (chances for such a hand = 0.0014%)

- **'Four of a Kind':** 4164 to 1 (chances for such a hand = 0.0240%)

- **'Full House':** 693 to 1 (chances for such a hand = 0.1443%)

- **'Flush':** 508 to 1 (chances for such a hand = 0.1969%)

- **'Straight':** 252 to 1 (chances for such a hand = 0.3968%)

- **'Three of a Kind':** 46.3 to 1 (chances for such a hand = 2.16%)

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- **'Two Pair':** 20 to 1 (chances for such a hand = 5%)

- **'One Pair':** 1.37 to 1 (chances for such a hand = 72.99%)

- **'No Pair /High Card':** 0.995 to 1 (chances for such a hand = almost 100%).

2. **Poor odds.** I am reminded (by Albert Speer) of the time during WW2 (1939-1945) when Adolf Hitler used to tell his Head Office staff that, *"Either I am going to win this here war or I'm not!"* upon which his secretary would, quite sarcastically to boot, retort with, *"Either it is going to rain or not!"* (And actually, get away with it).

In other words, Hitler had, by his own confession, given himself a 50/50 (50%) chance of either winning or losing the war, good odds in both directions, but he anyway still lost the war. Ask any gambler: Bookmaker 'odds' are not guarantees!

3. **The Bible gives better odds**. In comparison with Hitler's 50% chance of winning the war (which he still lost) just compare the odds given in the above list and then people still ask why so many gamblers (in movies) are often *(i) decrepit and unemployed bums* and/or *(ii) running away from loan sharks who want to break their knees.*

Be that as it may, the Bible gives odds infinitely more promising for those who want to bid the

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industry of gambling (and trying to evade loan sharks) goodbye, in fact they are guaranteed:

> *"Come now, and let us reason together, says Jehovah; though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool."*
>
> [Isaiah 1:18MKJV].
>
> *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*
>
> [John 3:16MKJV].
>
> *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*
>
> [Romans 6:23MKJV].
>
> *"Jesus said to her, I am the Resurrection and the Life! He who believes in Me, though he die, yet he shall live."*
>
> [John 11:25MKJV].

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Chapter 35

GOOD NEWS!

(The Gospel of Jesus Christ: Offered to All but forced on None)

1. **Proposition #1. No excuse.** Everyone knows there is a GOD and has no excuse. The Bible says:

> *"For the unseen things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being realized by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, for them to be without excuse."*
>
> [Romans1:20MKJV].

2. **Proposition #2. The Invitation still stands.** GOD invites everyone irrespective of race, ethnicity, gender, age, colour, socio-economic status, political affiliation or current religious persuasion to come to Him for the forgiveness of their sins:

> *"Come now, and let us reason together, says Jehovah; though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool."*
>
> [Isaiah1:18MKJV].

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3. **Proposition #3. Jesus Christ died for all sinners.** Jesus Christ has died for the sins of all people on earth to save all sinners from everlasting hell & damnation:

> *"Faithful is the Word and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."*
> [1Timothy1:15MKJV].

4. **Proposition #4. All people have sinned.** There are no exemptions; all of us are guilty of being sinful and fallible human beings.

> *"If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us."*
> [1John1:10MKJV].

5. **Proposition #5. Confession.** If we confess our sins to Jesus Christ (not to some 'priest'), He will forgive us:

> *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*
> [1John1:9MKJV].

6. **Proposition #6. Jesus Christ the only Mediator.** Sinners may confess their sins at any time and directly to Jesus Christ, the only true Mediator between Man and God:

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"For God is one, and there is one Mediator of God and of men, the Man Christ Jesus."
[1Timothy2:5MKJV].

7. **Proposition #7. Confessing the Name of Jesus Christ.** Sinners will be saved when they confess the Name of Jesus Christ.

"Because if you confess the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved."
[Romans 10:9MKJV].

8. **Proposition #8. Before God every knee shall bow.** Every person shall yet bow the knee to God and confess Christ ... either as a born-again, confessing Christian or as an unrepentant unbeliever:

"For it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God ... and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.'"
[Romans 14:11; Philippians2:11MKJV].

A wise man has once said:

"The man or woman who can bow and kneel before God will yet stand before kings."

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Chapter 36

G.R.A.C.E.: GOD'S REDEMPTION AT CHRIST'S EXPENSE

(God's Grace did not come Free)

1. **The Author of Grace.** The Author of Grace is God, i.e., the YHWH (Jehovah) of Moses and Mt. Sinai who, at the time of His conversation with Moses, introduced Himself as the 'I Am!" Can there be any gift or treasure more illustrious and precious as the Grace of God when God Himself has solemnly promised: *"My grace is sufficient for thee."* (?)

The Apostle Paul writes:

> *"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."*
>
> [2Corinthians12:9-10KJV].

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God clearly is the Author of divine Grace, as affirmed by the Apostle Paul in his letter to Philemon*:*

> *"Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."*
>
> [Philemon1:3KJV].

2. **The Gift of Redemption.** The Apostle Peter writes:

> *"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."*
>
> [1Peter1:18-19KJV].

The Apostle Paul writes:

> *"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus … In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."*
>
> [Romans3:24; Ephesians1:7KJV].

P.S. Merriam-Webster defines *'Redemption' as 'freedom from guilt or blame for having done something wrong.'* (Gk. 'Apolutrōsis': '*ransom in full', 'salvation', 'deliverance').*

3. **The Price involved.** In terms of the well-worn mantra that *"there ain't no such thing as a free lunch!"* (TANSTAAFL) it stands to reason that

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there, of necessity, has had to be a price, i.e., the *precious blood of Christ* [1Peter1:18-19] to be paid to insure the redemption of mankind. The Bible affirms:

> *"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."*
> [Romans3:24KJV].
> *"But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many."*
> [Romans5:15KJV].
> *"For if by one man's offence [ADAM] death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ."*
> [Romans5:17KJV].
> *"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."*
> [Romans5:21KJV].
> *"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."*
> [Hebrews2:9KJV].

4. **The First Adam vs. the Last Adam.** It has pleased God to, in terms of the *First Adam-Last Adam* doctrine, redeem mankind by the *sacrifice, resurrection and righteousness of Jesus Christ,* His *'Paschal Lamb'* of choice:

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> *"Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come … For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive … And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam [JESUS] was made a quickening spirit."*
>
> [Romans5:14; 1Corinthians15:22,45KJV].

5. **The Gift of God.** God's gift of *Eternal Life* is forced on none yet offered to all irrespective of race, colour, gender, age, socio-economic status, political affiliation or current religious persuasion (the atheist included): Why not accept it today? The Bible says:

> "*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*
>
> [Romans6:23KJV].

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Chapter 37

HOPE FOR MAN

(The Darkest Hour is just before Dawn)

1. **The Darkest Hour.** In this surely one of the darkest, if not the darkest, pandemic-driven hours on earth I believe we have, ideologically speaking, arrived at that juncture in history where we must choose between two primary ideological, socio-cultural forces confronting society today i.e. a choice between the 'vectors' (i.e. quantities that have magnitude and direction) of *(i) Secular Humanism > Transhumanism > Posthumanism* and the (ii) *Gospel of Jesus Christ born from Judaism (Hebrew Bible/Old Testament) > Christianity (New Testament);* and, there is no demilitarised zone or neutral corner in this clash between ideas … everyone shall have to decide, and decide fast.

2. **Secular Humanism, Transhumanism & Posthumanism.** In a nutshell, the ideology or belief-system usually associated with ideas like atheism, agnosticism, atheism-evolutionism, (scientific pantheism), skepticism, cybernetics, moral relativism, situational ethics, 'survival of the fittest', paganism, communism, fascism,

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Bolshevism, evolutionism etc. with an emphasis on 'Darwinian Evolution' and a focus on artificial intelligence incorporating advanced technologies to enhance human capacity and intelligence.

Should these forces prevail, the future will be known as the era of 'cyborg' (hybrid) type human beings biologically reinforced with all kinds of (physical) electronic implants & devices and a strong doctrinal aversion to ideas like the existence of an Intelligent Designer and Creator God.

P.S. Having said that, bear in mind that those in the medical field engaged in purely medically-technologically improving the lot of or alleviating the discomfort of disabled people by using technological implants as medical aids should not be construed as necessarily being part & parcel of the abovementioned movements.

3. **Evangelical Christianity's objections against Humanism trends.** Objections are manifold, some examples:

3.1 **Death-after-Death.** The 'anti-gospel' (bad news) of believing in *Death-After-Death** … of what use is a 'product' (ideology, worldview) without a long-term promise or utility value? It is a *Dead Poets Society & Darwinian Kool-Aid* on steroids.

*These groups usually reject the idea of *Life-after-Death* (the 'Hereafter').

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3.2 **Mortality Rate.** The fact of the 100% mortality rate for every generation of man; an approach to life in the cosmos that has been failing these worldviews and groups (usually adherents of Darwinism) for years; why can't 'Progressive Evolution' *(sic)* after 'millions of years of progressive evolutionism' *(sic)* get its act together once and for all and get it right, i.e. a 0% mortality rate for mankind through the wisdom, sagacity and scientific prowess of the evolutionists? Their failure in this respect only serves to vindicate an indelible, immutable Biblical principle:

"And as it is appointed to men once to die, but after this the judgment."

[Hebrews9:27KJV].

3.3 **Moral Compass.** The lack of an *Authoritative Moral Compass* (e.g., *Bible & Judeo-Christian values*) and over-emphasis on the typically *moral relativism, situational ethics* idea of *'survival of the fittest'* and not of the survival of the most kind, compassionate honest, moral, decent and fair which exposes Darwinism ('Evolutionary Theory'), if it were true (valid) as bestial, selfish, brutal and cruel.

3.4 **Judeo-Christian vs. Leftist Values.** The spiritual decay & apostasy from Biblical morality and Judeo-Christian values usually associated with extreme Leftist, Secular Humanist values, worldviews and lifestyles. Where *Christianity* is scarce anarchy, arson,

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wholesale looting, decadence, drunkenness and organised & petty (opportunistic) crime flourish.

3.5 **Rejection of God's Love.** The cavalier rejection of God, the Bible, Jesus Christ and the invitation to justification by faith founded on the sacrifice and righteousness of the Master and Creator of the Universe, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has warned in no uncertain terms:

"Therefore whoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My Words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man shall also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

[Mark8:38MKJV].

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Chapter 38

HOW TO CHOOSE LIFE

(Choose Life … Choose Jesus Christ!)

1. **The Gospel of Jesus Christ.** Salvation is offered to all and forced on none. The rumour that Salvation for individual persons is decided (by Heaven's Courts of Absolute & Infinite Justice) on a selective, non-negotiable, predestined basis irrespective of how any such a person may have decided or lived, is not supported by the Holy Scriptures. Even though the gift of faith to believe the Gospel has come from the Sovereign God above, man as a free moral agent (created in the image of God who has free will) still has the power and right to freely choose how he will deal with such a bestowed gift … what could be clearer than this?

> *"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to each according as his work is. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, the First and the Last. Blessed are they who do His commandments, that their authority will be over the Tree of Life, and they may enter in by the gates into the city. But outside are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and everyone*

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> *who loves and makes a lie. I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify these things to you over the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright and Morning Star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let the one hearing say, Come! And let the one who is thirsty come. And he willing, let him take of the Water of Life freely."*
>
> [Revelation22:12-17MKJV].

2. **The Priceless Offer & Invitation to Repent.** The Bible is replete with admonishments and invitations for us to fear, love, obey, draw near, repent and call upon God etc. Do the math: If GOD has created us as 'cannon-fodder' for damnation, why would He then so urgently (i) warn us against Hell; (ii) over and over invite and admonish us to make our peace with Him?; and (iii) send His own Son to die on the cross for the sins of the world. What could be clearer than this?

> *"Come now, and let us reason together, says Jehovah; though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool."*
>
> [Isaiah 1:18MKJV].

3. **The Power in the Blood (Sacrifice) of Jesus Christ.** The Bible teaches that the Blood (Sacrifice)of Jesus Christ, GOD's 'Paschal Lamb' slain for the sins of the world, cleanses from all sin:

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> *"But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."*
> [1John1:7MKJV].

4. **We must Choose!** We must choose today ... tomorrow may be too late. The God of Moses and Mt. Sinai; the YHWH (Jehovah) of the Children of Israel and 'I AM' of the exodus is desperately warning all people today, and, after having read the warning below, no reader having read it will ever again be able to say at the Great White Throne Judgment, *"I didn't know!":*

> *“I call Heaven and earth to record today against you. I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore, choose life, so that both you and your seed may live.”*
> [Deuteronomy 30:19MKJV].

Choose LIFE ... choose Jesus Christ.

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Chapter 39

JESUS CHRIST SAVES FROM THE 'GUTTERMOST' TO THE UTTERMOST

(The Love of God is far greater than lips or tongue can ever tell!)

1. **Why Jesus Christ Came.** The Bible says:

> *"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but so that the world might be saved through Him."*
>
> [John3:17MKJV].
>
> *"For you know the grace of our Lord Je-sus Christ, that, though He was rich, for your sakes He became poor, in order that you might be made rich through His poverty."*
>
> [2Corinthians8:9KJV].
>
> *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*
>
> [Romans6:23MKJV].

1.1 **Scenario #1.** Deep into the night and in the cold early morning hours Jesus of Nazareth stood shivering, accused with all kinds of trumped-up charges from the religious authorities of Jerusalem egged on by the unruly riffraff in the crowd. At a modest

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distance, and warming his hands over the fire, stood the Apostle Peter, too afraid to come out bold in support of his Master. So, when the servant woman pointed to him and exclaimed, *"You're one of them!"* he instinctively denied it vehemently, forgetting about his solemn oath of earlier*:*

"Peter said to Him, though I should die with You, yet I will not deny You. All the disciples also said the same."

[Matthew26:35MKJV].

When others also insisted, Peter denied it again, altogether *three times until the cock crowed.* The Bible says:

"And the Lord turned and looked on Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, Before the cock crows, you shall deny Me three times. And Peter went out and wept bitterly."

[Luke22:61-62MKJV].

1.2 **Scenario #2.** It would appear as if, after the crucifixion, the Apostle Peter must have withdrawn from the rest of the disciples out of sheer remorse and as perhaps unworthy of the cause, as the angels' instruction to Maty Magdalene at the site of the empty tomb was:

"But go tell His disciples and Peter that He goes before you into Galilee. There you will see Him, as He said to you."

[Mark16:7MKJV].

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1.3 **Scenario #3.** How does a man reverse and undo sin, or his denouncing of a best friend? How does he find forgiveness and closure after such monstrous moral failure? Enters the Master of pastoral counselling and all clinical psychologists who surely must have known that there was no way He was going to leave behind a disciple in the throes of abysmal, self-castigating self-condemnation! For years, as a youngster, I was puzzled over this passage, until finally the proverbial 'penny' dropped. The Bible says:

"Then when they broke fast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. He said to him the third time, Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me? Peter was grieved because He said to him a third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things, You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep."
[John21:15-17MKJV].

Three times in a row came the question, one for each of the three earlier pre-crucifixion denials! How was that for professional pastoral counselling and closure?

Not long afterwards, the same Peter who a little earlier had cowered before a servant girl when he (Peter) was challenged over Jesus, stood up and preached a sermon that brought 'about three thousand souls' to their knees and to repentance.

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As the song goes:

Could we with ink the ocean fill
And were the sky of parchment made
Were every stalk on earth a quill
And every man a scribe by trade
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry
Nor could the scroll contain the whole
Tho' stretched from sky to sky!

Frederick M. Lehman
(1868-1953)
[© Hope Publishing Co.]

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Chapter 40

JESUS CHRIST STILL SAVES!

(The Invitation still stands)

1. **All people have sinned.** The Bible says that all people have sinned and, should we deny that fact, the truth would not be in us.

> *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."*
>
> [1John1:8MKJV].

2. **As sinners we cannot save ourselves by our own efforts or performance.** No matter how high we jump, we can never jump high enough to touch the moon or be good enough to earn Eternal Life on personal merit. Living an exemplary life may keep us out of jail but it will take the *Blood (Sacrifice) of Jesus Christ* to keep us out of Hell.

> *"But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."*
>
> [1John1:7MKJV].

3. **Jesus Christ has come to save sinners.** Jesus did not come into the world to condemn sinners but to save sinners.

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"Faithful is the Word and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners ... For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but so that the world might be saved through Him."

[1Timothy1:15a; John3:17MKJV].

4. **Those who accept Jesus Christ as LORD and confess His Name will be saved.**

"Because if you confess the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved."

[Romans 10:9MKJV].

5. **Those who refuse to accept Jesus Christ as LORD and the risen Saviour will die in their (unforgiven) sins.** Jesus Himself has warned:

"Therefore I said to you that you shall die in your sins, for if you do not believe that I AM, you shall die in your sins. [John8:24MKJV].

6. **There is no other Name than the Name of Jesus Christ by which we must be saved.** The Bible says:

"And there is salvation in no other One; for there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

[Acts4:12MKJV].

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7. **Those who accept Jesus Christ as LORD and are pardoned by Him will experience great JOY in Eternity.** Already far advanced in age and describing a vision on the Isle of Patmos, the beloved disciple John said:

> *"And I heard as the sound of a great multitude, and as the sound of many waters, and as the sound of strong thunders, saying, Hallelujah! For the Lord God omnipotent reigns!"*
>
> [Revelation19:6MKJV].

8. **The invitation to be saved still stands.** The Bible teaches:

> *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."*
>
> [John3:16-17MKJV].
>
> *"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."*
>
> [Revelation22:16-17MKJV].
>
> *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*
>
> [Romans6:23MKJV].

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Chapter 41

LET THERE BE LIGHT!

(Creating Matter from Pure Light?)

1. **Introduction.** Will scientists ever be able to create matter from light? It has recently been intimated in articles all over social media that *matter could be created from light,* or to be more specific, creating *atoms from photons.*

According to Phys.Org *QED (Quantum Electrodynamics)* is already in use in *quantum networks* and *quantum information processing,* although current *light-matter* interactions are still limited to individual atoms, and not in complex systems involved in quantum-based technologies.

2. **Creating matter from pure light.** Ben Turner writes as follows:

> *"In a stunning demonstration of one of Einstein's most famous equations, physicists are claiming to have created matter from pure light for the very first time.*
>
> *"Albert Einstein's famous* $E= mc^2$ *equation says that if you smash two sufficiently energetic photons, or light particles, into each other, you*

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should be able to create matter in the form of an electron and its antimatter opposite, a positron.

"But this process, first described by American physicists Gregory Breit and John Wheeler in 1934, has long been one of the most difficult to observe in physics — mainly because the colliding photons would need to be highly energetic gamma rays, and scientists are not yet able to make gamma ray lasers. Alternative experiments have shown matter being produced from multiple photons, but never in the one-to-one way needed to most conclusively prove the effect."

[Livescience.org].

In the meantime, the only serious obstacle to proceed with the experiment appears to be the scientists' inability to create *gamma ray lasers* to produce highly energetic *gamma rays*.

3. **Divine interaction with Light.** Christians are well acquainted with God's interaction with the elusive properties of light. The Bible says:

"Bless Jehovah, O my soul. O Jehovah my God, You are very great; You have put on honor and majesty, covering Yourself with light as with a robe; and stretching out the heavens like a curtain; He lays the beams of His upper rooms in the waters. He sets the clouds as His chariots; He walks on the wings of the wind; He makes His angels spirits, His ministers a flaming fire."

[Psalm104:1-4MKJV].

"And after six days Jesus took Peter and James and John and led them up into a high mountain, apart by themselves. And He was transfigured before them. And His clothing became shi-

ning, exceedingly white as snow such as no fuller on earth could whiten them. And about eight days after these sayings, He took Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray."

[Mark9:2-3MKJV].

"And as He [JESUS CHRIST] prayed, the appearance of His countenance was altered, and His clothing was dazzling white. And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah."

[Luke9:29-30MKJV].

"For He [JESUS CHRIST] in His own time will reveal who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in light which cannot be approached, whom no one of men have seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen."

[1Timothy6:15-16MKJV].

4. **The Secrets of Creation.** So far, all the science in the world and the ages has progressed to a point where scientists must concede that they know only about 5% of what is going on in the Universe; the rest they say (95%) is *'undetectable by scientific instruments dark matter + dark energy'*. After all, the Bible does teach:

"The secret things belong to Jehovah our God, but the revealed things belong to us and to our sons forever, so that we may do all the words of this Law."

[Deuteronomy29:29MKJV].

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So, the secrets of Creation are going to remain obscured for some time to come. But, having said that, it would appear as if God, when He spoke the world into existence by the words of His mouth, knew what He was doing, considering the scientists' feverish efforts to create matter (atoms) from light (photons):

> *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form and empty. And darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light. And there was light."*
>
> [Genesis1:1-3MKJV].

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Chapter 42

DO YOU HAVE A GOSPEL FOOTPRINT IN MISSIONS?

(Five Crowns of Inspiration)

1. **Good reasons to support Missions.** All over the world missionaries, young and old, are fighting the good fight, keeping the faith and struggling to bring the Gospel to a world that is, by and large, still (in 2010 PEW Report) about 69% ignorant about the life-changing impact of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Reasons for us to be involved in or support & sponsor Missions:

1.1 Christ commanded it
[Matthew28:19; Mark1:15].

1.2 Currently (PEW Report 2010) only 31% of the world population is Christian.

1.3 Missions are successful, e.g., by the year 2030 China (currently with 100 million Christians) is expected to be more than 50% Christian
[BBC Report, 2020].

1.4 Sponsoring your local (or distant) missionary is an excellent way for missions-minded believers (who love Jesus Christ and

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honour God) to be involved in Missions and Mission-fields.

1.5 Gratitude will often show up as loving involvement in the Gospel and Missions, and those for whom have been forgiven much will always have overflowing gratitude.

1.6 Even as little as the proverbial ‘cup of cold water’ (but no ‘used teabags’) to a missionary in distress or in the heat of the struggle will not go unrewarded by Jesus Christ.

“And whoever shall give to one of these little ones a cup of cold water to drink, only in the name of a disciple, truly I say to you, He shall in no way lose his reward.”

[Matthew10:42MKJV].

1.7 We are co-workers in the Truth.

“Therefore we ought to entertain such, so that we might be co-workers in the truth.”

[3John1:8MKJV].

1.8 Jesus Christ has promised that, should the work we build remain, we shall have our reward.

“If anyone's work which he built remains, he shall receive a reward.”

[1Corinthians3:14MKJV].

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1.9 Paul admonishes us to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

[Philippians3:14MKJV].

1.10 Stewards of the Gospel are to be found to having been faithful

“And the rest, it is sought among stewards that one be found faithful.”

[1Corinthians4:2MKJV].

1.11 The Gospel is Good News bringing glad tidings of justification by faith, forgiveness of sins, Salvation and Eternal Life

“And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things!"

[Romans10:15MKJV].

1.12 Everybody should hear the glad tidings that, although the wages of sin is death, the Gift of God is Eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

[Romans6:23MKJV].

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1.13 Good stewards of the Gospel and God's interests will, when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, receive a never fading crown of glory

"And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a never-fading crown of glory."
[1Peter5:4].

2. **The Five Crowns of Inspiration.** As mentioned earlier, the five crowns that inspire Christians into service are:

2.1 **The Crown of LIFE.** Reserved for those who have endured temptation and have been faithful to the point of death:

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."
[James1:12KJV].
"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
[Revelation2:10KJV].

2.2 **The INCORRUPTIBLE Crown.** Reserved for those who demonstrated self-denial and perseverance in Christian service:

"And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible."

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[1Corinthians9:25KJV].

2.3 **The Crown of RIGHTEOUSNESS.** Reserved for those who have loved the appearing of Jesus Christ and have lived in anticipation of His Second Coming:

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

[2Timothy4:8KJV].

2.4 **The Crown of GLORY.** Reserved for those who faithfully shepherded their flock:

"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

[1Peter5:4KJV].

2.5 **The Crown of REJOICING.** Reserved for those who have spread the Gospel outside the ambit of the local Church (Missions):

"... For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?"

[1Thessalonians2:19KJV].

"Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved."

[Philippians4:1KJV].

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Chapter 43

WHY MEMBERS OF ALL FAITHS ARE ALLOWED TO ACCEPT JESUS CHRIST AS SAVIOUR

(Christianity not Exclusively for Christians Only)

1. **Introduction.** The reasons why members of all Faiths are allowed to accept Jesus Christ as Saviour are abundantly clear, for instance:

1.1 **Christianity is an open Faith.** Christianity is not a 'members only' movement; it is a Faith open to all those who believe and accept Christ. Offered to all but forced on none, all those who accept Jesus Christ as Saviour are given the power to become children of God. Having said that, renouncing a current (superfluous) religion in the process may well follow afterwards because of the power, influence and gentle persuasion of the Holy Spirit as the fruit of faith, repentance, consecration and sanctification.

"But as many as received Him, He gave to them authority to become the children of God, to those

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who believe on His name, who were born, not of bloods, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but were born of God."

[John1:12-13MKJV].

1.2 **Jesus Christ has invited all people from all nations to repent and believe the Gospel.** All people from all nations are invited to repent and believe the Gospel irrespective of race, colour, age, gender, socio-economic status, political affiliation or current religious persuasion; that is why the Bible has been translated in so many languages spoken in the world today.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but so that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes on Him is not condemned, but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God."

"In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand ... From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent! For the kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

"And after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God draws near. Repent, and believe the gospel."

"And they [the disciples] went out and proclaimed that men should repent."

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[John3:16-18; Matthew3:2; 4:17; Mark1:15; 6:12MKJV].

1.3 **Everybody should be allowed to, by personal free choice, receive the 'Good News'.** The word Gospel means *Good News,* i.e., the good news that, if we were to confess our sins to God, Jesus Christ (the Son of God) has been empowered to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

"And this is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us."

[1John1:5-10MKJV].

1.4 **Everybody should be allowed to accept God's gift of Eternal Life.** Christianity is the only Faith where the good news of the *Gift of Eternal Life* from God may be bestowed on a person, not on the basis of such a person's *personal merit or performance,* but on the *personal merit of*

Jesus Christ who died on the cross of Golgotha for the sins of the whole world.

"But now, being made free from sin, and having become slaves to God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but so that the world might be saved through Him."

"All things are delivered to Me by My Father. And no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son will reveal Him. Come to Me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke on you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest to your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify these things to you over the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright and Morning Star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let the one hearing say, Come! And let the one who is thirsty come. And he willing, let him take of the Water of Life freely."

[Romans6:22-23; John3:16; Matthew11:27-30; Revelation22:16-17MKJV].

1.5 **Everybody has the right to, by choice, accept Jesus Christ.** All people are allowed to accept and invoke Jesus Christ as their

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Saviour and Advocate to plead their case with the Father (without having to go through any priest or middleman) when they fall into sin.

"My little children, I write these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He is the propitiation concerning our sins, and not concerning ours only, but also concerning the sins of all the world."

[1John2:1-2MKJV].

1.6 **Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between God and men.** Jesus Christ is the only Mediator (spokesperson) between God and men authorised to speak on behalf of those who have accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour and who hope and believe on Him for Salvation & Eternal Life.

"If anyone teaches otherwise, and does not consent to wholesome words (those of our Lord Jesus Christ), and to the doctrine according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing. He is sick concerning doubts and arguments, from which comes envy, strife, evil speakings, evil suspicions, meddling, of men whose minds have been corrupted and deprived of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness. Withdraw from such. But godliness with contentment is great gain ...

"But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by so much He is also the Mediator of a better covenant, which was built upon better promises ..."

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"For if the blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ (who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God) purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause He is the Mediator of the new covenant, so that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, those who are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance …"

" … and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel …"

" And there is salvation in no other One; for there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

[1Timothy6:3-6; Hebrews8:6; 9:13-15; 12:24; Acts4:12MKJV].

1.7 **Jesus Christ has authorised and admonished His disciples/believers worldwide to preach the Gospel to all nations.** According to the Bible, all nations (and not only 'Christians') have the right to hear the Gospel and accept Jesus Christ as Saviour.

"And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority is given to Me in Heaven and in earth. Therefore go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things, whatever I commanded you. And, behold, I am with you all the days until the end of the world. Amen."

[Matthew28:18-20MKJV].

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2. **Inclusivity & Judgment.** Christianity stands out above all other religions for many reasons, e.g., among others:

2.1 The Faith's founder has a grave that's empty; He has risen from the grave (Death, where is thy sting?).

[Luke24:6].

2.2 It is the only Faith on earth that has the members address God the Father not only as their *Creator* but also as their *Heavenly Father.*

[Matthew6:14, 26, 32; 15:13; 18:35; Luke11:13].

2.3 It is the only Faith in the world that, despite tremendous traditional push-back in many places, has fully liberated and emancipated women culturally and politically to the extent where women, in principle, are allowed to excel on equal footing with men.

When God created women, He did not create an inferior (alternate) species; bear in mind that our Saviour (the 'Last Adam') was born from a woman (a sacred conception for which she did not need a man at all).

[1Corinthians7:3, 14,16; Galatians3:28; 4:4; Ephesians5:33].

2.4 The Founder still speaks to His followers today through the Word of God (the Bible) and through prayer.

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[Matthew18:11,20; 28:20].

2.5 The Founder is coming back again to set up His Kingdom on earth.
[MatthewChptr.24; Revelation1:7].

2.6 Believers may inherit Eternal Life, not on the grounds of personal merit or moral perfection (or through persecuting and/or harassing members from other faiths) but simply through faith in Jesus Christ made possible through the sacrifice, death, resurrection and righteousness of Jesus Christ, God's *Paschal Lamb* who died for the sins of the world.

2.7 The Founder, Jesus Christ, will also be the Chief Justice presiding over the *Great White Throne Judgment* at the end of days, whether those to be judged will, at that juncture in history, will be Christians or not.
[Revelation20:11-12; John5:22-27].

Chapter 44

JOY IN REPENTANCE

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(Repent and Believe the Gospel!)

1. **Joy in Repentance.** There are few things in the life of a human being that can bring so much JOY to any person (as in the French 'Joie de Vivre') like heartfelt repentance from unbelief and making his or her peace with God.

The human need to repent is as natural as the need for oxygen, water, rest, sleep, recreation, food, friendship, fellowship, survival & self-actualization. … those who resist it, resist it at their own peril.

2. **Believing the Gospel.** People should repent and believe the Gospel.

> *"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."*
>
> [Mark1:14-15KJV].

3. **Ignorance overlooked.** God has overlooked our ignorance and now wants people everywhere to repent.

> *"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath*

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given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

[Acts17:30-31KJV].

4. **Obedience vs. disobedience.** Repentance is an act of obedience, and the wrath of God rests on the 'children of disobedience'.

"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."

[Ephesians5:6KJV].

5. **What 'repentance' means.** Repentance means to turn from pagan unbelief to belief in the Gospel of Jesus Christ (and not just a new 'New Year's Resolution' or 'turning over a new page')

" ... And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

[Mark1:15KJV].

6. **Unbelief is unprofitable.** Unbelief and the refusal to repent is unprofitable.

"For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

[Hebrews4:2KJV].

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7. **God resists the proud.** God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble who exhibits a contrite, repentant spirit.

> *"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."*
>
> [Isaiah57:15KJV].

8. **Forgiveness of sins.** Repentance will lead to the blotting out of our sins and times of refreshing from God.

> *"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."*
>
> [Acts3:19KJV].

9. **Following (Putting on) Christ.** Repentance should be followed up by baptism as a sign of obedience and commitment to the mission and cause of Jesus Christ.

> *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."*
>
> [Mark16:16KJV].
>
> *"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."*
>
> [Galatians3:26-27KJV].

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10. **Even Job repented.** Were Job and atheist, he probably would have shaken his fist at God for the ordeal He had put him through, yet even then that indefatigable hero of faith, Job, has had to repent after his season of terrible adversity, tragedy and doubt.

> *"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."*
>
> [Job42:5-6KJV].

11. **Surprising rewards of repentance.** Repentance often will change lives dramatically for the better without us having even prayed for it.

> *"And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before ... So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters."*
>
> [Job42:10, 12,13KJV].
>
> *"Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."*
>
> [James5:11KJV].

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12. **The 'Gift of Faith' is free.** Repentance is possible even for those who struggle to believe, as God will freely bless them with the *gift of faith* (to believe with!) should they ask for it.

> *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."*
>
> [Ephesians2:8-9KJV].

13. **Result & consequence of repentance.** Those who repent (i.e., believe the Gospel) shall not perish but will have Everlasting Life.

> *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."*
>
> [John3:16-17KJV].

14. **Don't be ashamed to repent.** Too embarrassed to associate with Jesus of Nazareth? Bear in mind that, at His Second Coming, Jesus Christ will be ashamed of those who were ashamed of Him and who earlier had refused to repent.

> *"For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed,*

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when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels."

[Luke9:25-26KJV].

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Chapter 45

THE GRAVE ERROR OF DELAYED REPENTANCE

(Today is the Day of Salvation)

1. **How Jesus Christ launched His ministry.** Ask this question to the proverbial 'man-in-the-street' and you'll be surprised at the variety of answers you'll get. The historian (or student of Biblical prophecy) might probably say that He announced Himself from the back of a donkey during a 'Jubilee parade' through Jerusalem's streets; whereas the derelict drunk or intrepid alcoholic might probably be tempted to retort with, *"He changed water into wine!"*

Be that as it may, I believe that Jesus Christ began His ministry with this clarion call and message:

> "*Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."*
>
> [Mark1:14-15KJV].

This He then followed up with this grave warning:

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> *"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."*
>
> [John8:24KJV].

2. **The King's Message is urgent.** The Holy Spirit calls people to repentance *today because tomorrow may be too late;* when I thus see the way in which atheists waver and nonchalantly dismiss the Biblical call to repentance I shudder at the thought of the dire consequences for such cavalier attitudes. Here we all are, being catapulted toward Eternity at the breakneck speeds of *107 000 kph* (the velocity of Planet Earth in its orbit around the Sun); *828 000 kph* (the Solar System on its way around the centre of the Milky Way Galaxy); *3 600 000 kph* (the Local Group of Galaxies' speed toward the 'Great Attractor') and *1 404 000 kph* (the Earth's speed toward the 'Great Attractor' using CBR (Cosmic Background Radiation) as frame of reference. The Bible says:

> *"For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart, as in the day of strife, as in the day of testing in the wilderness ... "*
>
> [Psalm95:7-8KJV].
>
> *"But exhort one another daily, while it is called today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin ... while it is said, "Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation ... He again marks out a certain day, saying in David, 'Today,' (after so long a time).*

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> *Even as it is said, 'Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.' "*
> [Hebrews3:13,15; 4:7KJV].

3. **Objections.** Objections to the call to repentance are manifold, but, in all honesty, one cannot say that one does not believe in a 'God' that one 'cannot see' and in the same breath go and hide in the basement from a virus one cannot see … does one? Be reasonable.

"Show us the evidence!", they say. 'Evidence' is embarrassingly abundant; every time I open my eyes and ears, I see the beauty and hear the music of Creation playing out like a majestic (albeit sometimes mortifying and humbling) symphony. Writes C.S. Lewis:

> *"Really, a young atheist cannot guard his faith too carefully. Dangers lie in wait for him on every side … I gave in and admitted that God was God … perhaps that night, the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England."*
> [Excerpts from 'Surprised by Joy'].

4. **Charles Spurgeon on delaying repentance.** He writes:

> *"No man would refuse to enter a lifeboat because he did not know the specific gravity of bodies. Neither would a starving man decline to eat until he understood the whole process of nutrition. If you will not believe until you can understand all mysteries, you will never be saved at all. If you allow self-invented difficulties to keep you from*

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> *accepting pardon through your Lord and Saviour, you will perish in a condemnation that will richly deserved. Do not commit spiritual suicide through a passion for discussing metaphysical subtleties."*
> ['The Anointed Life'].

5. **No 'Regret Revote' in Eternity.** There can be no second chances, 'regret revotes' in Eternity. The Bible says:

> *"If the clouds are full of rain, they will pour out on the earth; if a tree falls toward the south or the north, wherever it falls, there it will lay."*
> [Ecclesiastes11:3ISV].

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Chapter 46

LIFE IS ABOUT CHOICES

(Only two kinds of people?)

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1. **C.S. Lewis and choices.** C.S. Lewis has once remarked:

> *"There are only two kinds of people, i.e., those who say to God, 'Thy will be done!' and those to whom God must say: 'All right then, have it your way!' "*

Many people today may be under the erroneous impression that faith in and obedience to God is mandatory, a serious mistake indeed. God has left choices such as believing in and obeying Him open to our free choice. What will, however, be mandatory in Eternity one day will be the consequences (results) of the choices we will have made today. For instance, when God decided to make a world with people in it, He (humanly & hypothetically speaking) probably was confronted with three possible scenarios:

1.1 To make a world where only the 'good' was possible, and 'people' were 'pre-programmed' to be and do 'good' only.

1.2 To make a world where only the 'evil' was possible, and people were 'pre-programmed' to be and do the 'evil' only.

1.3 To make a world where the 'good' as well as 'evil' were in principle both possible and people were 'pre-programmed' for neither in particular; the freedom to choose was left open to the people themselves against the background of the fact that the *law of God* is

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written on the hearts of mankind as a *moral compass (called 'conscience')* by which to navigate through life.

The Bible teaches:

> *"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."*
>
> [Romans2:14-16KJV].

2. **The most morally expedient option was chosen.** God must have considered the last option the most viable one, because it was the only one offering *free will to free moral agents to freely choose between good and evil of their own volition*, otherwise He may have ended up with a race of robots ('tin soldiers') incapable of free, voluntary and spontaneous worship, love, compassion, empathy and kindness.

God, as the Creator of heaven and earth, has *free will,* and, if people are created in His image as the Bible teaches, then obviously they will have *free will* too. Being a fair, just and good God, He has thus given us the choice to choose between light and darkness, good and evil, life and death. The critical difference between God and man is that God has ZOE (original, eternal)

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life in Himself, whereas man was created with BIOS (borrowed) life. Likewise, God has *Absolute Free Will* while man has borrowed, *curtailed, limited free will.* Our *(borrowed) free* will never militate successfully against God's *Absolute Free Will* (referred to as the 'Sovereignty' of God). BIOS life bows before ZOE life and borrowed *'free will'* bows before *Absolute Free Will.*

3. **God is not diabolical & malicious.** Having said the above, some people (including some theologians) may now be tempted to believe and teach that, because God is *Absolutely Sovereign,* the *borrowed free will* of man has been maliciously captured by God to such an extent that he has no choice whatsoever over how he wants to react to good vs. evil, light vs. darkness or right vs. wrong, i.e. his so-called 'free will' is of academic value only.

The Bible clearly teaches that God will not interfere with the choices of sincere peoples' free will to choose or not to choose. The fact that God knows the *end from the beginning* and knows exactly in advance how *free moral agents* will have exercised their *free will* over time and what the future holds is of no consequence does not mean He is diabolically directing and manipulating such peoples' free will choices; such a system would make a mockery of the Holy character of God.

God has written his laws in our heart and has given us the Holy Spirit to influence us for the

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good through our ‘conscience’, but in the end we must choose. Some people simply will choose light over darkness (or vice versa). The Bible says:

> *“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.”*
>
> [John3:19-21KJV].

4. **A word of warning.** The Bible also teaches that those wicked and ungodly people who adamantly insist on refusing God’s call to repentance may eventually be given over to ‘uncleanness’ and ‘vile affections’ to a point of no return where a remedy and salvation may no longer be possible [Ref. Romans1:24-26]. The admonishment of a Holy God is however clear:

> *“See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.*
>
> *“But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall*

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not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it.

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

[Deuteronomy30:15-19KJV].

5. **Do the math.** If every little move and decision we make were predetermined and predestined by a Higher Being, why would:

(i) the citizens Sodom & Gomorrah be blamed for their sin but

(ii) Abraham Lot, Job, Joseph & Daniel commended for their piety while in life? Why would God reward people who accept Christ with good things and punish bad & evil people with bad things if they were 'pre-programmed' to have decided what they have decided? Jesus Has said:

"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day."

[Matthew11:23KJV].

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PART FOUR:

POLITICS

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Chapter 47

WHY CHRISTIANS SHOULD HAVE A FOOTPRINT IN POLITICS

(The only Prerequisite for Evil to Flourish is for Good People to do Nothing)

1. **Proposition #1. Christians should have a footprint in politics.**

Just as all Christians should have a footprint in *charity outreaches, missions* and *evangelisation,* Christians should have a footprint in politics, obviously depending on temperament, training, ministry and focus, for not everyone is necessarily cut out to be a high-profile spokesperson for justice in civil society.

Let's face it … countries and governments go to the dogs when they abandon the traditional *moral compass of time-tested Judeo-Christian values* in favour of *postmodernist, secular humanist, leftist moral relativism and situational ethics* where the distinction between right and wrong has been blurred and is defined by a perplexing kaleidoscope of personal opinions and bizarre ideas about the origins of life and the way forward for mankind.

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The days of the *'leaving of politics to the politicians'* are over; like unruly, boisterous, recalcitrant and disruptive teenagers, most politicians today will probably need unrelenting, pounding and persistent lifelong adult supervision, and sometimes even of the most pitiless and dispassionate, professional kind.

2. **Proposition #2. The heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.**

History in conjunction with scientific research have clearly shown that all people are born naked, illiterate and undomesticated little savages with a slate as receptive and clean as the untrodden snow.

Career politicians need Christian leadership and input to provide moral balance and governance stability in a society and corporate culture (interest groups) hellbent on lobbying for funds and favours of all kinds at the taxpayer's expense … and those are only the visible-to-the-naked-eye honest ones. Good manners, morality, ethics, justice, fairness and sanity in politics do not come automatically or by default; it must be painstakingly cultivated and inculcated in politicians by the responsible adults in the room.

> *"Blessed is the man who trusts in Jehovah, and Jehovah is his trust. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters; it sends out its roots by the river, and it shall not fear when the heat comes, but its foliage shall be green; and he is not worried*

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> *in the year of drought, nor will it cease from yielding fruit. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I Jehovah search the heart, I try the reins, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings."*
>
> [Jeremiah17:7-10MKJV].

3. **Proposition #3. The person, whether immature conservative or diehard liberal, that will turn and humbly kneel before God, will yet stand before kings.**

The Christian's task in politics is to remind politicians, leftist or conservative, Christian or non-Christian, not to equate education, post-graduate degrees, impressive academic credentials and glowing resumes (CVs) with knowledge and wisdom but that in the final analysis *the fear of God is the beginning of all knowledge and wisdom.* The Bible teaches:

> *"And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding … "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction."*
>
> [Job28:28 and Proverbs1:7KJV].
>
> *"The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility … By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life."*
>
> [Proverbs15:33; 22:4KJV].

4. **Proposition #4. Christians should pray for ethical, moral governance.**

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Unless we want educated pagans (who dismiss the fear of and respect for God as antiquated, ridiculous and obsolete) to govern the country, Christians, together with decent and responsible non-Christians from other ideological and/or political perspectives, are called to remind politicians, whether conservative or liberal, to be humble, to repent and to pray to the Creator for mercy, grace and favour in the performance of their fiduciary duties as they are tasked to act both legally and ethically in citizens' interests. The Bible teaches:

> *"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."*
>
> [2Chronicles7:14KJV].

5 **Proposition #5. Christians should, along with all other decent, honest and concerned non-Christian citizens, resist, expose and root out the wicked politicians' tabernacles of bribery & corruption.**

The Bible teaches that the tabernacles ('tent's) of bribery must be apprehended and rooted out.

5.1 **Moses.** Moses' last words to the Children of Israel were:

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"For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands."

[Deuteronomy31:29KJV].

5.2 **Job.** *"For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery."*

[Job15:34KJV].

5.3 **Samuel.** *"And his (Samuel's) sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment."*

[1Samuel 8:3KJV].

5.4 **Solomon.** *"He who is greedy for gain troubles his own house, but he who hates bribes shall live … The king establishes the land by judgment; but he taking bribes tears it down."*

[Proverbs15:27; 29:4MKJV].

5.5. **Isaiah.** *"Woe, sinful nation, a people heavy with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, sons who corrupt! They have forsaken Jehovah; they have provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger; they have gone away backward."*

[Isaiah1:4MKJV].

"He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly; he who despises the gain of oppressions, who shakes his hands free from holding bribes, who stops his ear from hearing of blood, and shuts his eyes from seeing evil."

[Isaiah33:15MKJV].

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5.6. **Ezekiel.** *"In you they have taken bribes to shed blood. You have taken usury and increase, and you gained by extortion of your neighbors, and you have forgotten Me, says the Lord Jehovah."*
[Ezekiel22:12MKJV].

5.7 **Judas Iscarioth.** *"Then he who had betrayed Him, seeing that He was condemned, sorrowing, Judas returned the thirty pieces of silver again to the chief priests and elders … And he threw the pieces of silver down in the temple and departed. And he went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood."*
[Matthew27:3,5MKJV].

5.8 **Corrupt Roman guard at the empty grave of Jesus Christ.** *"And as they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city and declared all the things that were done to the chief priests. And being assembled with the elders, and taking counsel, they gave enough silver to the soldiers, saying, Say that His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we slept. And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will persuade him and make you free from care. And taking the silver, they did as they were taught. And this saying was spread among the Jews until today."*
[Matthew28:11-15MKJV].

5.9 **Jesus Christ.** *"Even so every good tree brings forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree corrupt and its fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by its fruit."*
[Matthew7:17; 12:33MKJV].

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5.10 **Titus.** *“In all things having shown yourself a pattern of good works: in the doctrine, purity, sensibleness, without corruption, in sound speech that cannot be condemned, that he who is opposed may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.”*

[Titus2:7-8MKJV].

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Chapter 48

WHY CHRISTIANS SHOULD SPEAK OUT AGAINST PUBLIC VIOLENCE

(Apathy in the Citizenry kills)

1. **Apathy on Steroids.** People stand amazed (and aghast) at the spineless apathy with which certain 'city fathers' (and I use the term rather loosely) have met with the diabolical anarchy, looting and violence of so-called 'protesters'.

Postmodernist, secular humanist Leftism, it would appear, has always been weak on discipline and crime and strong on the appeasement and tolerance of the man of violence … their 'situational ethics' and 'moral relativism' sometimes gone not only berserk but completely ballistic.

2. **When Good Men & Women do Nothing.** The Nazis could perpetrate their atrocities so successfully and with such reckless impunity because it had taken so long for good men and women to come around to do something about it. Wrote Martin Niemöller (1892-1984), survivor of the Nazi Holocaust:

"First they came for the socialists,
and I did not speak out, because I was not a socialist.

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Then they came for the trade unionists,
and I did not speak out, because I was not a trade unionist.
Then they came for the Jews,
and I did not speak out, because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for me …
and there was no one left to speak for me.“

(From the poem, ‘First They Came for the Socialists’)

3. **The Age of Confusion.** We live in the age of confusion because society has, by and large, traded its time-tested, Judeo-Christian moral compass of the Bible for the moral relativism of secular humanists and postmodernist ‘intellectuals’ smug in their ‘Ivy League’ ivory towers far from the madding crowd, begging the very question: *“How has it been working for you?”*

Society has learnt the hard way: *Neglect to discipline your youth or child with love and compassion* and the lawman and judge will *discipline him later without any compassion at all.*

4. **God has rejected their ‘Moral Relativism’.** The Bible teaches:

> *“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil; who put darkness for light and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!”*
> [Isaiah5:20mKJV].

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Chapter 49

THE MYTH OF POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS UNITY

(Life is not as simple as it seems)

1. **The Great Divide.** Although not a popular statement, most informed people will probably concede that those who are not ignorant (politically) or gullible (religion-wise) will know that the world is divided into the two major forces of *Light vs. Darkness, Theism vs. Atheism* and *Conservatism vs. Leftism.*

The only practical way to move forward, it would appear, is for all parties from both sides of the ideological aisle that divides *to agree to disagree* and then work at useful ways to peacefully co-exist notwithstanding the divide. Academics, politicians and philosophers (preaching *'unity at all costs')* are barking up, I'm afraid, an invisible tree that does not exist.

2. **Thesis & Antithesis.** The two primary worldviews of e.g. *Christianity (the 'thesis')* and e.g. *Atheism ('antithesis')* each espouses and promotes values philosophically wholly irreconcilable; these two mutually exclusive worldviews will, like east and west, never meet and never engineer any so-called 'unity' between

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the *Biblical (Judeo-Christian) values* supported by the forces of *Judaism & Christianity* and *postmodernist Atheism* with its pathological emphasis on such *moral relativism* driven ideas as *Consequentialism, Freethought and Secular Humanism.*

3. **The Values of Life.** Whereas *Atheism* at large (irrespective of brand or flavour) takes the short-term view of no Creator-God (or no Intelligent Designer) and no Eternal Life (in other words, 'Death-after-Death'), Christianity on the other hand takes the long-term view of the fear of the LORD, Salvation and Eternal Life ('Life-after-Death') by the resurrection and righteousness of Jesus Christ. The Jewish philosopher, Joshua Loth Liebman, has written:

> *"The more immature we are, the more we cry out for the satisfaction of inconsistent and irreconcilable delights ... we have to weigh a present pain against a future pleasure and a present pleasure against a future pain. To do this well is to become and artist in the values of life."* [Liebman: 221].

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe has written:

> *"What win I if I gain the thing I seek?*
> *A dream, a breath, a froth of fleeting joy.*
> *Who buys a minute's mirth to wail a week,*
> *or sells eternity to get a toy?"*

(Johann Wolfgang Goethe as quoted in Downes, R.P. 'Hours with the Immortals').

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4. **‘Moral Relativism’ won’t work.** Are you, as Joseph Loth Liebman has suggested, an artist in the values of life? Bear in mind that the atheists’ ‘moral relativism’ points-of-departure (e.g., *Consequentialism, Freethought & Secular Humanism*) will never cut it with a Holy God in a moral Universe. God has issued a dire warning:

> *“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil; who put darkness for light and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!”*
> [Isaiah5:20MKJV].

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Chapter 50

CHRISTIANITY: TOP 50 PERSECUTION HOTSPOTS IN THE WORLD

(“Ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer … I have overcome the world.”)

[Jesus Christ, approx. 33.A.D.]

1. **Persecution of Christians worldwide.** According to *‘Open Doors’ ‘World Watch List 2020’,* the countries below are considered the top fifty hotspots where Christians are persecuted most in the world, arranged from *‘Extreme’ (North Korea)* down to *Niger (High).* I present the list (compliments of ‘Open Doors’) irrespective of the reader’s personal sentiments on the *Second Coming of Jesus Christ* i.r.o. the timing of the *Rapture* (i.e., whether *Pre-Trib; Mid-Trib; Post-Trib or No-Trib*).

It is presented in the good faith that the nearer we draw to the time of the *Second Coming,* the clearer Biblical prophecies *(e.g., from Isaiah, Daniel, the Gospels, the Epistles and Revelation etc.)* in this regard will begin to surface eschatologically.

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2. **Top 50 Persecution Hotspots.** To date the top 50 are:

North Korea; Afghanistan; Somalia; Libya; Pakistan; Eritrea; Sudan; Yemen; Iran; Syria; Nigeria; Saudi Arabia; Maldives; Iraq; Egypt; Algeria; Uzbekistan; Myanmar; Laos; Vietnam; Turkmenistan; China; Mauritania; Central African Republic; Morocco; Qatar; Burkina Faso; Mali; Sri Lanka; India; Tajikistan; Nepal; Jordan; Tunisia; Kazakhstan; Turkey; Brunei Bangladesh; Ethiopia; Malaysia; Colombia; Oman; Kuwait; Kenya; Bhutan; Russian Federation; United Arab Emirates; Cameroon; Indonesia; Niger.

3. **The privilege of Prayer.** Jesus has said:

> *"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."*
>
> [Matthew6:6KJV].

The Apostle Paul has said:

> *"But without faith it is impossible to please him [God]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is [exists], and that he [God] is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."*
>
> [Hebrews11:6KJV].

P.S. Let's all pray for the persecuted Christians of the world.

4. **Teaching disciples to pray.** Jesus has taught disciples to pray as follows:

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> *"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."*
> [Matthew6:9-13KJV].

5. **A great man's prayer of faith answered.** The *Book of Job* is believed to have been written anytime between 1900 – 1700 B.C. and to be one of the oldest, if not indeed the oldest, book in the Bible. Bear in mind that the wrong prayer unanswered probably has the same mathematical value than the right prayer answered. Job once prayed:

> *"Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!"*
> [Job19:23-24KJV].

That 'book' and that 'rock' is the BIBLE, and we still read Job's prayer today after all the millennia! And, because the Bible is indestructible and the Word of God immutable, the words of Job are preserved for all Eternity, such was the power of his prayer and the faithfulness of God … even after thousands of years.

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PART FIVE:

CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY

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Chapter 51

GOD IS FAITHFUL

(Grateful to the Lord!)

1. **Return of the Bible.** One Sunday morning, as my wife and I were coming from church (Centurion, South Africa) we decided to stop over at a local shopping centre for some grocery items at the supermarket, about five kilometres away from our church campus. Upon emerging from the shop and approaching the car, one of the parking attendants stepped closer and offered me a copy of a Bible with the slick 'opening line', *"Sir, here's your Bible!"*

Being quite streetwise about such nefarious, high-pressure sales techniques (in our country such people will often offer you some novelty of a 'gift' for free that you don't really need and, as you walk away with it your hand (probably an item stolen from a shop nearby), will hint for a 'donation'. So, declining the offer and thanking him for the kind gesture, proceeded to get into the car. The attendant was, however, quite adamant: *"It's yours … don't you want it?"*

It so happened that, when we were getting ready to leave the church's parking lot, I had placed my Bible on the roof of the car to take my jacket off, and afterwards never bothered to pick up the Bible from the roof of the car where I had

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left it. In the meantime, it had travelled some kilometres all the way to the shopping centre without slipping off from the roof of the car.

Incredulous, I stared at the man, embarrassed, took the Bible, thanked him profusely and pressed a handsome tip into his hand out of sheer gratitude ... that Bible simply was not meant to get lost.

2. **Unscathed from a car wreck.** In about 2009 I got a phone call from my daughter urging me to rush to the scene of a car crash in which she and my wife had just been involved; my wife's white *Nissan Almera* having just a short while earlier been written off as scrap when it was sandwiched in between a *Ssang Yong SUV* and a *Nissan Hardbody* at a traffic light intersection.

Both my wife and daughter had stepped out of the car quite shaken relatively unscathed although with some less serious injuries to attend to and follow up on; a passenger from inside the *SsangYong* (the guilty driver who had caused the collision and who who had been talking on a cellphone at the time) had unfortunately suffered a broken leg.

3. **Bank Robbery.** In 2011, while presenting a training session for my firm in a wealthy mining town in the 'platinum belt' of South Africa, about 100kms from my home, my wife phoned me one late afternoon to tell me that the bank where she was working at the time had just been robbed of large amounts of cash and that even the bank's

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patrons have lost all the cash, cellphones and jewelry on their persons.

The irony of it all was that because the robbers had used my wife as a sort of 'proxy' through which to 'bark' their instructions at some of the personnel and patrons at large in her banking 'neck of the woods', they, in the commotion that ensued, had completely overlooked my wife's 'valuables' ... she went home unscathed and with all her possessions untouched. The single security guard was fired for cooperating with and not standing up to the robbers.

4. **Debriefing.** Do these testimonies mean that where accidents still do happen, and people still suffer loss in spite of being devout and sincere, God is not always faithful? I do not think that it is the case.

I surmise that we are all on different learning curves ('different strokes for different folks at different times') and in His quest to allow His Providence to play out on planet Earth God probably will sometimes allow evil and adversity a free hand one time or another; we're certainly not qualified to second guess His ways.

The Bible teaches that His thoughts are not our thoughts and His ways not our ways, and in the end the mortality rate for all human beings anyway is 100% for every generation in every nation, regardless of socio-economic status, gender, age, race, culture, religious persuasion or political affiliation.

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We are, for all intents and purposes, immune against dying until our work on Earth is finished. The Bible says:

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.
My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.
He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.
Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.
The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.
The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.
The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.
The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore."
[Psalm121:1-8KJV].

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Chapter 52

RESCUED BY THE SAVIOUR'S LIGHTNING

(Saved by the Father of Lights!)

1. **How it all Started.** During the late 1980s we have been living for some time in the *Bushveldt* region of *Limpopo, South Africa,* a mountainous, blistering hot, dry (and when it rains) suffocating, sub-tropical climate where wild animals, creepy crawlies and flowering trees flourish to their hearts' content.

I was working as a personnel-officer in a large iron ore mine's human resources dept., and, on this day, was writing my monthly report for the mine manager to sign and despatch to our corporate headquarters in Pretoria.

2. **The Report.** This particular report was one of those earmarked for 'very 'important people' and I was sworn (almost at the risk of my reputation and my job) to the accuracy of the report.

It comprised about eight or nine paragraphs of critical (confidential but not necessarily secret) information for the 'top brass' in Pretoria. To add further insult to my stress level the report, which I had started writing the previous day, had to be in at the 'telex office' for despatch by the senior typist-clerk, StellaS., by 5 p.m. (17:00) of that day.

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3. **The Promise.** Late that afternoon, I arrived at the telex office with my report a considerable time before the 5 p.m. deadline but, to my dismay, was informed that the telex machine was 'down' due to inclement weather.

The head typist, still from the reliable, 'old-school' class, then told me that she, due to her own looming 'deadlines', would anyway be working late and so solemnly promised that my report would be 'telexed' before she went home that night … so far so good.

4. **The Shock.** As I was too jittery to sit with the family that evening I went to bed early, a huge mistake as I anyway could not sleep.

At about 8 p.m., the awful realisation i.e., that *Paragraph 6* of my report was totally wrong (because I had omitted some important updated statistics) suddenly hit me like a huge chunk of crushed ice; now I suddenly found myself wishing I had never sent the report and praying desperately for divine intervention from above.

If only I, by some mysterious divine alchemy, could stop *Paragraph 6* from being telexed to Head Office!

5. **The Rescue.** When I, now reduced to the proverbial 'fidgeting nervous wreck', arrived at the telex office the next morning at 7 a.m., the poor typist just stood there aghast and embarrassed, apologising profusely for not

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having sent the telex; the lightning had apparently disabled the telex machine for the night, and she hadn't sent the report!

What the typist did not realise was that the fact that the machine was now disabled (but expected to be operative in a few hours) afforded me ample time to rewrite and correct the report! What, however, blew me away was where the lightning had knocked out the report, i.e., right where (the incorrect) *Paragraph 6* was supposed to have commenced, like this (*Telex Machine interrupted by lightning right here):*

Paragraph 6. ..... ◘

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Chapter 53

KING PROTEA: THE GENUINE ARTICLE

(Surprised by an unexpected Gift!)

1. **King Protea.** The *King Protea (Protea cynaroides)*, South Africa's national flower, is a member of the *Proteaceae* ('sugar bush') family of flowers in the floral kingdom.

It is a large flower that, together with other (smaller, but not less charming) members in the family (plus a variety of supporting species) often together make for a gorgeous bouquet, especially at formal functions.

2. **The testimony.** My wife and I were coming from a Sunday morning-service and when we turned into this supermarket off Saxby Street in Centurion there was this young guy, probably a student, offering artificial replicas of the *King Protea* for sale at the exit of the parking lot.

"What a beautiful replica!" my wife exclaimed at first sight of the exquisitely crafted artificial 'flower', carefully designed and assembled from all kinds of beads and stuff associated with the artform; it glittered and sparkled delightfully in the late morning sunshine.

"Yip …" I replied in affirmation, and then, with a subtle air of snobbish superiority,

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continued, *“but, you know what … I’d prefer the original!”*

You see, years ago, as a young suitor of 21 and still painfully clumsy and naive, I had given a girl I liked a small arrangement of plastic flowers (!) and boy did I live to regret that. She did not scoff but ‘others’ did, and since then I did not want anything to do with ‘artificial’ flowers.

3. **Preparing the dinner.** Now, the whole idea of stopping over at the supermarket was to buy some extras needed for a little private *braai (‘bar-b-que’)* on the lawn that we had arranged for the afternoon, having invited a couple (a retired gynaecologist and his wife, a retired registered nurse) for lunch.

Our guests arrived at about 2 pm with my wife in the kitchen preparing the salads and myself on the lawn some distance away stoking the ‘coal-burner’ fire. From the corner of my eye, I noticed the guests entering the house with the visiting wife brandishing a gift for the ‘hostess’.

The ‘lunch’, as the English would say, went ‘swimmingly’, and after our charming guests had departed, I went to sit in our modest little lounge (we are retired too) simply to rest and savour the conversations of the afternoon.

It was only then that I looked and saw the ‘hostess-gift’ the courteous lady had brought, standing there in a vase in all its glorious, flowering splendour, i.e., a relatively freshly cut giant of a (genuine) *King Protea,* a real goose-bumps producer of an ‘epiphany’.

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4. **The Genuine Article.** Although skeptics usually may be tempted to chalk all such events up as 'coincidence', I was enthralled by it, especially for me, a person of very modest accomplishments and probably totally undeserving of such a timely gift … a real miracle.

Any mathematician ought to be able to tell that the mathematical odds against such a remarkable coincidence happening so wonderfully expediently probably were astronomical.

5. **The Analogy.** I have grown tired of 'imitations' of the Saviour, i.e., sketches & paintings of Jesus in children's' Bibles, films and/or statues and crucifixes depicting Christ, the 'artificial flowers' of religion: Just as was the case with the Protea, I want the 'genuine article' … Jesus Christ in person, to come. May it be today, this week, this month, this year …!

> *"Behold, He comes with the clouds, and every eye will see Him …"*
>
> [Revelation1:7aMKJV].

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Chapter 54

ALL LIVES MATTER

(‘Decent’ vs. ‘Undecent’ People)

1. **Growing Up.** Before my father had opened his string of small ‘general dealer’ shops in our district, I’ve been growing up as the son of a ‘goldminer’ on one of the richest gold reefs of South Africa. My father’s designation at the time was that of a ‘shaft carpenter’, and we’ve been living in a bustling mining town in a stereo-typed (but decent and comfortable) company ‘bungalow’ at the time of the following incident that involved three of my ‘dear’ friends:

2. **The Ambush.** It was in 1959 when I was going on 12 and we were having dinner (scrambled eggs on toast) when two of my friends, Wayne and Bill (aliases), came up to us to proposition my father for me to go and play some game on an empty plot at the back of our house; my father acquiesced and within minutes I jumped the wooden ‘split-poles’ that gave access to the empty plot of land and where my two school-pals were already waiting for me.

Without a decent introductory speech or any prior warning and for no known reason whatsoever, however, out of the blue they suddenly jumped me and started beating me up.

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I was so shocked that, within seconds, I turned into a frenzied tornado of energy, probably sparked by the adrenalin rush from the 'fight-or-flight' impulse.

Surprisingly I was doing quite well in defending myself when welcome help suddenly parachuted in from a totally unexpected source.

4. **The tide turns.** My mother had, a few months earlier, given a temporary job to a migrant (domestic) worker from a place called 'Witsieshoek' in Lesotho.

This domestic worker had a son my age with whom I shared a name and with whom I had been playing in the yard for months e.g., some boxing, wrestling and what I can only describe as 'sword-fighting' or 'African stick-fighting', never realising that I probably had been honing my rudimentary 'martial arts skills' for this momentous day.

So, through my tears and the barrage of blows and kicks I looked up only to see my skinny, golden brown little *Sotho** pal, as tough as nails, jump that fence like the proverbial 'bat out of h… ll' and boy, did we give my two 'assailants' a thorough thrashing.

After only a few minutes of the unpleasant altercation (to put it mildly) we stood and watched amazed at the rattled pair with Wayne's chubby little legs and Bill's skinny little knock-knees (like that of an emaciated heron still nursing an old football injury) hastily carrying them over their fence, safely home.

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*Sotho: *"The **Sotho** /ˈsuːtuː/[2] people, or **Basotho** /bəˈsuːtuː/, are a Bantu-language family ethnic group of Southern Africa who speak Sesotho. They are native to modern Lesotho and South Africa. The Basotho have inhabited the region since around the fifth century CE and are closely related to other Bantu-language family speaking peoples of the region.*

"The modern Basotho identity emerged from the accomplished diplomacy of Moshoeshoe who unified the disparate clans of Sotho–Tswana origin that had dispersed across southern Africa in the early 19th century. Most Basotho today live in Lesotho or South Africa, as the area of the Orange Free State was originally part of Moshoeshoe's nation (now Lesotho)."

[Wikipedia].

P.S. 'fifth century CE': '5 A.D.' ('Anno Domini').

5. **All Lives Matter!** The Bible rarely if ever mentions the skin-colour of the various folks involved, though race by nationality ('Ethiopian', 'Greek', 'Parthian', 'Roman', 'Jew' etc.) is often implied.

When the chips are down, however, we're all the same of only two possible 'colours', i.e., on the side of either KIND or UNKIND; DECENT or UNDECENT*.

*'Undecent': Not to be confused with the word 'indecent' (immodest).

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PART SIX:

PROVIDENCE

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Chapter 55

THE LAW OF ABUNDANCE

(By faith Abraham obeyed)

1. **From seed to harvest.** The farmer knows that to put the seed into the fertile soil does not mean a terrible loss, but the potential for an abundant harvest.

The millions of seeds later harvested during harvest time is the reward for having risked the probably costly, precious seed in the first place ... no pain, no gain. Had he decided to cling to his seed in miserly ignorance, *that* would have brought the terrible loss.

2. **The story of Abraham.** The Bible says:

> *"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out into a place which he was afterward going to receive for an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he went."*
>
> [Hebrews11:8KJV].

Trusting God for a son, Abraham and Sarah were promised and received a son when Abraham was a hundred years old. After all, God had promised:

> *"And God said, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son indeed. And you shall call his name Isaac. And I*

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> *will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him."*
> [Genesis17:19MKJV].

God has also said:

> *"I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens ..."*
> [Exodus32:13bMKJV].

3. **The story of Hagar.** With Hagar Abraham had *Ishmael* who had twelve sons and one daughter, i.e., *Nebaoit, Kedar, Abdeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, Kedemah & Mahalath* (daughter).
[Genesis Chptr25].

4. **The story of Sarah.** With Sarah Abraham had *Isaac > Jacob (Israel)* with his twelve sons and one daughter i.e., *Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin & Dinah* (daughter). Jacob later also adopted Joseph's sons *Ephraim and Manasseh.*
[Genesis Chptr35].

5. **The story of Keturah.** After Sarah's departure to her heavenly reward, Abraham remarried and had more children with Keturah: *Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah.*
[Genesis25:1-2MKJV].

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6. **Sowing & Reaping.** The Bible says:

> *"Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. He who goes forth and weeps, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."*
>
> [Psalm126:5-6MKJV].

7. **The Great Harvest to come.** When Jesus Christ died on the cross of Golgotha, He invested Himself as seed in the earth with the hope of a record harvest:

> *"Looking to Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right of the throne of God."*
>
> [Hebrew12:2MKJV].

Jesus explains:

> *"Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit."*
>
> [John12:24bMKJV].

8. **The Harvest.** From the Apostle John's vision on the Isle of Patmos we read:

> *"After these things I looked, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palms in their hands.*

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And they cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb.

"And all the angels stood around the throne, and the elders, and the four living creatures, and they fell before the throne on their faces and worshiped God, saying, Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever. Amen.

"And one of the elders answered, saying to me, Who are these who are arrayed in white robes, and from where do they come? And I said to him, Sir, you know. And he said to me, These are the ones who came out of the great tribulation and have washed their robes, and have whitened them in the blood of the Lamb.

"Therefore they are before the throne of God, and they serve Him day and night in His temple. And He sitting on the throne will dwell among them. They will not hunger any more, nor thirst any more, nor will the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will feed them and will lead them to the fountains of living waters. And God will wipe away all tears from their eyes."

[Revelation7:9-17MKJV].

9. **Don't be a 'child of disobedience'.** The Bible warns against the spirit of 'disobedience':

"For though walking about in flesh, we do not war according to flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, pulling down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of

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Christ; and having readiness to avenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled."

[2Corinthians10:3-6MKJV].

"And He has made you alive, who were once dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience."

[Ephesians2:1-2MKJV].

"Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the children of disobedience."

[Ephesians 5:6MKJV].

"Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness (which is idolatry), on account of which things' sake the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience."

[Colossians3:5-6MKJV].

"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and if every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by those who heard Him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with different kinds of miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?"

[Hebrews2:1-4MKJV].

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Chapter 56

THE TRUE WEALTH

(Lay-up Treasures in Heaven)

1. **Born on the 'White Waters Ridge'.** Contrary to what many believe, the true wealth is not diamonds, gold, stocks & bonds, multimillion dollar homes and yachts etc.

For instance, I was born in 1947 on the 'main reef' of the *Witwatersrand ('White Waters Ridge'),* at the time one of the richest gold reefs (if not the richest) in the world.

For decades I grew up in the little suburb of the mining village of Randgate, South Africa in the bustling city of Randfontein, went to school and played while mining engineers and rock drill-operators were grinding rock faces thousands of meters below my feet and my father was slogging away as a 'shaft-carpenter' at the *Randfontein Estates Gold Mining Co. (South Africa)* begun by millionaire industrialist J.B. Robinson, a member of the exclusive (as well as controversial & envied) 'Randlords Club', of the South African gold rush in 1886.

2. **Childhood during the idyllic, post-war 1950s.** During the 1950s and on weekends we used to drive all the way up the long and winding '*Main Reef Road',* a busy thoroughfare situated right on top of what the mining moguls

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considered the richest ('main') gold reef of the time, to my grandparents' home about 50kms or so away in Auckland Park, Johannesburg.

Although we were not desperately poor and making a fairly good living ('lower middle-class', I suppose) with my father working on the mines, I personally nevertheless never became 'rich' notwithstanding growing up on the rich 'main gold reef', or living only within 100 kms away from the *Premier Mine* where, in January 1905, the biggest diamond in the world, the 'Cullinan Diamond' (3107 carats), was found in 1905, just after the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902.

3. **Humans mature but slowly.** Be that as it may, I have, in the meantime, come a long way since and have seen many peoples' fortunes (including my own) come and go. What I have learned, however, is that 'true wealth' usually is priceless and cannot always be purchased with money. On the contrary do I consider robust health, that is, *age-appropriate* robust health, for instance, as 'true wealth'.

4. **The promise of Jesus Christ.** The most precious wealth ever, however, is the wealth only God can give, i.e., *Forgiveness of sin; Justification* and *Salvation (Eternal Life)* founded on the sacrifice, death, resurrection and righteousness of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has said:

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> "*I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire, so that you may be rich; and white clothing, so that you may be clothed, and so that the shame of your nakedness does not appear. And anoint your eyes with eye salve, so that you may see.*"
> [Revelation 3:18MKJV].

5. **The Apostle Paul.** The Apostle Paul teaches us about the investment Jesus Christ has made in His pet (and main) project for planet earth, i.e., the Gospel and the Church:

> *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, for your sakes He became poor, in order that you might be made rich through His poverty … But now, being made free from sin, and having become slaves to God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end everlasting life … For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*
> [2Corinthians8:9; Romans6:23MKJV].

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Chapter 57

IT IS NO SIN TO BE WEALTHY

(God is a fabulously rich God)

1. **Diamonds in Stars.** Some scientists believe that:

> *"The white dwarf, BPM 37093, located 50 light-years (4.7×1014 km) away in the constellation Centaurus and having a diameter of 2,500-mile (4,000 km), may have a diamond core, which was nicknamed Lucy. If so, this gigantic diamond would be one of the largest in the universe."*
>
> [Wikipedia].

So, for all intents and purposes the Creator obviously is the richest Being in the Cosmos. No wonder He has said:

> *"For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills."*
>
> [Psalm50:10MKJV].

Were it thus a sin to be wealthy, then God could technically have been charged with being the greatest sinner in the Universe! Furthermore, the person with the richest 'Dad' in the Universe anyway is Jesus Christ:

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"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, so that where I am, you may be also."

[John14:1-3MKJV].

2. **Rich people from the Bible.** Some examples:

2.1 **Abraham.**

"And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold."

[Genesis13:2MKJV].

2.2 **Job.**

"His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east ... So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters."

[Job1:3; 42:12-13KJV].

2.3 **David.** According to the Bible:

"Now, behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the house of the LORD an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of

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silver; and of brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto."

[1Chronicles22:14KJV].

2.4 **Solomon.**

"And the weight of gold which came to Solomon in one year was six hundred sixty-six talents of gold, apart from the merchant men, and from the traffic of the traders, and from all the kings of Arabia, and from the governors of the lands. And King Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold; six hundred shekels of gold went into one target.

"And he made three hundred shields of beaten gold; three minas of gold went into one shield. And the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon. And the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold.

"The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round in the back part. And there were stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays; and two lions were standing on the six steps, on this and on that side. There was not the like made in any kingdom.

"And all King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. None were of silver; it was counted nothing in the days of Solomon."

[1Kings10:14-21KJV].

2.5 **Joses called Barnabas.**

"And Joses, who was surnamed by the apostles Barnabas—which is, having been interpreted, Son of Comfort—a Levite, of Cyprus by birth, a field

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being his, having sold it, brought the money and laid it at the feet of the apostles."

[Acts4:36-37KJV].

2.6 **Joseph of Arimathaea.**

"And evening having come, there came a rich man, from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was discipled to Jesus."

[Matthew27:57KJV].

3. **What really matters**. What really matters to God is not the colour of a man's skin, his race or whether he is poor, rich or very wealthy, but *righteousness and justice,* i.e., how he uses his wealth as a responsible steward not to defraud but to benefit the poor and needy:

"He delights not in the strength of the horse; He takes no pleasure in the legs of a man. Jehovah takes pleasure in those who fear Him, who hope in His mercy."

[Psalm147:10-11MKJV].

"Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do good; seek judgment, reprove the oppressor. Judge the orphan, plead for the widow."

[Isaiah1:16-17MKJV].

4. **The Example of Jesus Christ.** Christians worship the richest Prince in the Cosmos, and once again we may look to the life of Jesus Christ

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for the moral compass and gold standard of exemplary stewardship.

Even though the richest Prince in the Universe with the richest Father in the Cosmos, He has set the perfect example of humility, modesty and sacrifice for us to emulate:

> *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, for your sakes He became poor, in order that you might be made rich through His poverty."*
>
> [2Corinthians8:9MKJV].

5. **The Wealthy Christian's Duty.** The Bible teaches:

> *"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."*
>
> [1Timothy6:17-19KJV].

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Chapter 58

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BLIND JUSTICE

("As if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house and leaned his hand on the wall, and a snake bit him.")

[Amos5:19].

1. **Growing up.** I grew up during the 1940s through the 1950s and 1960s to the sounds of Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, Bing Crosby, Roy Rogers, the Andrew Sisters and Elvis (among others).

Now, during 1962, when I was 14 and in Grade 10 (Standard 8), my maths teacher was a little blond 'terrier' by the name of 'Adolph', affectionately known as 'Dolfie' (the proverbial lethal poison in a very small bottle) who could write his theorems in chalk on the green ('black') board as straight as a ruler *without a ruler ...* a true stickler to the architectural perfection of a Newtonian nightmare called *algebra, geometry and trigonometry* at the time.

2. **Come exams.** The results of test papers (maths) were, in Grade 10, usually handed out after the end-of-the-quarter break on the first day of the new quarter, and, as it was still the heyday of corporal punishment in schools, our

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tormentor Dolfie (at the 'Hentie Cilliers Highschool' in Virginia, Orange Free State, South Africa) had this Nazi-like post-exam rule for the boys in the class, for instance:

2.1 Test result of < 40%: <u>One stroke</u> with the cane

2.2 Test result of < 35%: <u>Two strokes</u> with the cane

2.3 Test result of < 30%: <u>Three strokes</u> with the cane.

So, after the first quarter of 1962, and after I had received my test scores and calculated my 'sentence', I went to the front of the class to stand in the queue for my punishment *of three strokes,* with boys arranged from *one stroke* (first) through *two strokes* (in the middle) and *three strokes* (last) to receive their punishment in 'instalments', so to speak,

This we had to receive by circulating the 'course' one by one on a revolving-door basis, each candidate in the queue (regardless of the gravity of his sentence) receiving only one stroke at a time and returning to our seat only after the entire quota of our designated number of strokes have been duly received.

3. **Blind Justice.** The pain of the cumulative effect of the *first two strokes* were too awful to endure and I managed to unobtrusively slip away

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and take my seat, thus cheating the ‘hangman’ out of *one stroke.*

Come the second quarter, my grades had improved, and I went to take my place in the queue for my now well-deserved *two strokes* with the cane. This time, however, I couldn’t dare to cheat; it would have been too obvious; besides, there were no handy ‘three strokes’ candidates behind me to cover my back (the previous quarter’s punishment must have worked).

It was, however, only after I had received my *two strokes* that I realised that I, to my dismay, had miscalculated and that I was supposed to have received only *one stroke,* not *two,* and so the scales of justice were finally balanced. To be truthful, I would have given my proverbial ‘right arm’ for somebody else to take my place in the queue for the punishment, but who? That is the beauty of the Gospel:

> *“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”*
>
> [Romans 5:8, 19KJV].

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Chapter 59

FACT vs. THEORY

(Evolutionary Theory: Fact or Theory?)

1. **Fact & Theory.** Someone once has said that:

> *"In theory, a theory will always in every instance ideally be affirmed in practice by practice; but, in practice, this seldom if ever happens!"*

Since the evolutionists adamantly insist that Darwin' *Evolutionary Theory* is an established, *scientific fact* (and not just a theory) I have made a little study of the words normally associated with the word 'theory':

1.1 **Actual Synonyms for the word 'Theory'.**

Hypothesis; Proposition; Supposition; Thesis.

[Very 'fuzzy'].

1.2 **Words related to (associated with) the word 'Theory'.**

Assumption; Concession; Premise; Presumption; Theorem; Conjecture; Generalization; Guess; Guesswork; Inference; Speculation; Surmise; Proffer; Proposal; Suggestion; Feeling; Hunch; Impression; Inkling; Notion; Suspicion; Abstraction;

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Concept; Construct. (The ‘fuzziness’ has now increased exponentially.

1.3 **Antonyms for the word ‘Theory’.**

Assurance, Certainty, Fact, Knowledge.
[Merriam-Webster].

2. **Questions.**

2.1 **Confused issues.** If Evolutionary Theory really were a scientific fact (and not just a ‘theory’) why would the *antonyms* (exact opposites!) for the word ‘theory’ (Merriam-Webster) then be ‘assurance’, ‘fact’, ‘certainty’ and ‘knowledge’?

To add further insult to injury the exact opposites for the abovementioned words would again be *dubious* (for ‘assurance’); *theory* (for ‘fact’); *uncertainty* (for ‘certainty’) and *ignorance* (for ‘knowledge’).

2.2 **Biology & the fossil record.** Let’s be honest … would any decent, respectable court-of-law in a civilised country accept fossil-evidence ‘millions of years old’ (alleged) as conclusive *prima facie* palaeontological empirical evidence of biological Evolution should matters ever come to a head over the subject?

Would the submitting of such ‘evidence’ *(sic)* furthermore be scientifically reasonable considering the fact that no totally neutral and unbiased (rational) person outside

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the (obviously biased) palaeontological ambit of scientific knowledge will ever be in a position to travel back in time to go and verify these extravagant claims about the age of fossils and the age of the earth (sediment) from which the fossils were excavated, especially since Merriam-Webster defines the antonyms for the word 'theory' as *assurance, fact, certainty and knowledge?*

In other words, how can scientists even dare to present *unverifiable, unfalsifiable* observations, data, deductions and opinions about nature and the world and call it 'empirical evidence'?

2.3 **Astronomy.** Would any decent, respectable court-of-law in a civilised country accept astronomy evidence (through observations optical & radio-telescopes) 'billions of years old' (alleged) as conclusive *prima facie* cosmological empirical evidence of stellar Evolution should matters ever come to a head over the subject?

Would the submitting of such 'evidence' *(sic)* furthermore be scientifically reasonable considering the fact that no totally neutral and unbiased (rational) person outside the cosmological ambit of scientific knowledge will ever be in a position to travel (i) *back in time* 'billions of years' to go and verify these extravagant claims about the age of the Universe and (ii) travel the *enormous distances* ('billions of light-years') involved in the studies especially since the distance to the

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edge of the observable Universe is given by science as *14.26 gigaparsecs* or *46.5 billion light-years* against the background of Merriam-Webster's antonyms to the word 'theory' as *assurance, fact, certainty and knowledge?*

In other words (again): How can scientists even dare to present *unverifiable, unfalsifiable* observations, data, deductions and opinions about nature and the world and call it 'empirical evidence'?

3. **True Facts.** If the evolutionists really want to impress, then they should give us some 'true (verifiable, falsifiable) facts' about Evolution etc.:

3.1 Show us an incision in the earth where we can see the *Geologic Column (Geologic Time Scale)* displayed exactly, i.e., strata by strata, as depicted in your Evolution-textbooks, encyclopaedias and supporting wall-charts etc.

3.2 Show us the millions of (missing) *transitional (intermediary) fossils* where 'evolution' was supposed to have happened between major species (or between e.g., *Mrs. Ples* and modern man) over 'evolutionary time'.

3.3 Explain how the *Pre-Cambrian strata's* fossil-evidence has made its transformation into the *Cambrian strata* in the peculiar way it has done.

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3.4 Show us an example where 'biological evolution' is happening this very moment for independent unbiased (science-trained) observers to study, analyse, collect and see with their own eyes.

3.5 Explain why *'Progressive Evolution'* has failed so miserably with its pet project *mankind* considering the *moral and socio-cultural regression* of mankind as so amply demonstrated by the increase in deadly weapons & brutal wars, crime, natural disasters, pandemics, epidemics, disease, discrimination, fraud & corruption and the worst of all … a 100% mortality rate for every generation of mankind in spite of 'millions of years' of 'progressive Evolution'.

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Chapter 60

WHY DOES EVIL HAVE TO EXIST?

(Good vs. Evil: The Mystery)

1. **Imagine the 'Ideal World'.** Speaking on the issue of overcrowded prisons, a reporter in South Africa once remarked on national television (what surely should have qualified for the first prize in 'journalese'):

> *"In the ideal world, inmates due for parole or medical parole will, to relieve prisons from overcrowding, be released on parole on time!"*

I for one would imagine that, in the ideal world, there would be no crime and no prisons at all. Be that as it may and using the *Bible* as the norm with the *American Constitution* as an example, we are able today to imagine some hypothetical models of the 'ideal world' as follows:

1.1 A world where people are free the pursuit (or not to pursue!) life, liberty and happiness … but nevertheless never under compulsion or at the expense of other peoples' life, liberty and happiness.

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1.2 Where people are free to love other people and be kind to them (or not!) voluntarily and spontaneously, but never under compulsion.

1.3 Where people are free to either hate, fear, love and/or worship their Maker (Creator) spontaneously and voluntarily (or not!) but never under compulsion.

2. **Free Moral Agency.** Evil has been in existence long before the fall of mankind in Eden, and the Bible teaches that *(i) even among His angels has God discovered 'error'* and that *(ii) a third of Heaven's angelic host have once rebelled against God only to be expelled from Heaven and cast into chains of darkness.*

When God creates intelligent beings, He creates them as *free moral agents* with the capacity to love and be kind to others and worship and obey God spontaneously and voluntarily, and not under compulsion; of what possible use would a race of robots or automatons (tin soldiers) have been without free will and pre-programmed to obey God mechanically like idiots? Wouldn't that automatically catapult such a 'deity' himself into the realm of an 'idiot'?

God can be absolutely and infinitely sovereign and *man a free moral agent* in a broken, imperfect world simultaneously without any moral or philosophical conflict or contradiction because He is omnipotent (with God all things are possible).

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Having said that bear in mind that by insisting on man as a *free moral agent* we have never said that man is omnipotent. While God's free will is authentic, omnipotent, absolute and infinite (ZOE life) man's free will is borrowed, limited and curtailed (BIOS life). It stands to reason, however, that man has free will because he was created in the image of God who has free will. The website *Bible Study Tools* defines ZOE life as follows:

> ***life***
> *of the absolute fulness of life, both essential and ethical, which belongs to God, and through him both to the hypostatic "logos" and to Christ in whom the "logos" put on human nature.*
> *life real and genuine, a life active and vigorous, devoted to God, blessed, in the portion even in this world of those who put their trust in Christ, but after the resurrection to be consummated by new accessions (among them a more perfect body), and to last for ever.*
>
> [Bible Study Tools].

3. **Ticking the boxes.** Let's be ruthlessly honest:

> 3.1 Would love, compassion, empathy and kindness toward others (and obedience to God) be spontaneous and voluntary in a world where people were programmed to be GODLY (GOOD) and Godly (good) only but without free will? (NO!).

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3.2 Would love, compassion, empathy and kindness toward others (and obedience to God) be spontaneous and voluntary in a world where people were programmed to be BAD (EVIL) and bad (evil) only but without free will? (NO!).

3.3 Would love, compassion, empathy and kindness toward others (and obedience to God) be spontaneous and voluntary in a world where people were created to have free will and capable of choosing between GODLINESS (GOODNESS) and WICKEDNESS (EVIL)? (YES!).

4. **Heaven will be perfect.** We live in an imperfect world and broken Universe; our society is, for all intents and purposes, a 'work in progress'. This world is not our permanent home, we're just a passing through. Somehow God must have through the process and era of life on earth (with all its voluntary goodness and unsavoury evil), although not ideal, as worth the risk, otherwise He would have aborted it aeons ago. Just like Abraham we are hoping for a world and a city not made by human hands.

4.1 **The Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (probably the Apostle Paul).**

"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out into a place which he was afterward going to receive for an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he went. By faith he lived in the land of promise as a stranger, dwelling in tents with

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Isaac and Jacob, the heirs of the same promise with him. For he looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

[Hebrews11:8-10MKJV].

"For you have not come to the mountain that might be touched and that burned with fire, nor to blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words (which voice they who heard begged that a word should not be spoken to them any more, for they could not endure the thing commanded, "And if so much as a beast should touch the mountain, it shall be stoned or thrust through with a dart," and so fearful was the sight that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake).

"But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are written in Heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.

"See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape, those who refused him that spoke on earth, much more we shall not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from Heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, 'Yet once more I will not only shake the earth, but also the heavens.' And this word, 'Yet once more,' signifies the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made, so that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.

"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which

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we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, 'Our God is a consuming fire.' "
[Hebrews12:18-29MKJV].

4.2 **The vision of the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos.**

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth. For the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. And the sea no longer is. And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her Husband.

"And I heard a great voice out of Heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away all tears from their eyes. And there will be no more death, nor mourning, nor crying out, nor will there be any more pain; for the first things passed away."
[Revelation21:1-4MKJV].

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Chapter 61

WHY SO MANY RULES?

(Were rules made to be broken?)

1. **The Learning Curve.** Children living in with parents are often inundated with all and diverse kinds of rules, e.g., to comb the hair, brush the teeth, make the bed, not to jump on the furniture, be polite, say 'thank you' etc. Why? Probably because parents want to raise well-mannered, cultured and courteous kids (or spare themselves the painful embarrassment in public of little spoiled-brat midgets throwing gigantic tantrums in the supermarket … usually before or after the cash register).

Be that as it may, what parents ultimately want is that their children, when they have grown up, will comb their hair, brush their teeth and be polite voluntarily and spontaneously instead of under compulsion and the stern command of the parent … it is called 'maturity'.

2. **Traffic rules.** Traffic signs were designed not as punishment for the motorist but as a blessing; they facilitate public order and, provided they are adhered to guarantee our safety and the smooth flow of traffic.

Satirically speaking, the traffic lights ('robots' in my country) are often out of order and

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consequently unpredictable; so, the standing joke is that, when there has developed some mother-of-a-traffic-jam ahead, the theory is that one can be sure that the traffic lights in that street are all probably working perfectly … our motorists simply have no idea how to deal with efficiency (!).

3. **The ultimate Moral Compass.** The Creator has given us, through the Jews (the de facto original stewards of the oracles of God), first the *Law of Moses* (the *Torah,* comprising the *Ten Commandments* and all kinds of moral & ceremonial laws) not to spoil our fun or make life difficult, but as mankind's *'schoolmaster'* to bring us to Christ:

> *"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."*
>
> [Galatians3:24KJV].

Then, when Christ (the 'Anointed One') arrived, the *Gospel and dispensation of grace* eventually followed encapsulated in the life, teachings and sacrifice of Jesus Christ at Golgotha. Says the Bible:

> *" … the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."*
>
> [Matthew7:28b-29KJV].

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4. **This world is just a 'Preview'.** Life on this earth is just *a preview of things to come in Eternity*; the so-called 'rules' (so many to remember!) have been given as a *'shadow of things to come'* to acquaint us with the values, principles, sentiments and character of God and the culture of His 'Heavenly House'; He wouldn't want to allow a race of brutes and hooligans with no 'manners' into His exquisite palaces without some 'finishing' of the race first. The Bible teaches:

> *"Therefore let no one judge you in food or in drink, or in respect of a feast, or of the new moon, or of the sabbaths. For these are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ."*
>
> [Colossians2:16-17KJV].
>
> *"Now the sum of the things which we have spoken is this: We have such a High Priest [JESUS CHRIST], who has sat down on the right of the throne of the Majesty in Heaven, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices.*
>
> *"Therefore it is necessary that this One have something to offer also. For if indeed He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the Law, who serve the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was warned of God when he was about to make the tabernacle.*
>
> *"For, He [God] says 'See that you make all things according to the pattern shown to you in the mountain.' But now He [JESUS CHRIST] has obtained a more excellent ministry, by so much*

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He [JESUS CHRIST] is also the Mediator of a better covenant, which was built upon better promises."

[Hebrews8:1-6MKJV].

"For the Law which has a shadow of good things to come, not the very image of the things, appearing year by year with the same sacrifices, which they offer continually, they are never able to perfect those drawing near. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? Because the worshipers, when they had been once for all purged, would have had no more conscience of sin.

"But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Therefore when He [JESUS CHRIST] comes into the world, He says, 'Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You have prepared a body for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You have had no pleasure.' Then I said, 'Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me) to do Your will, O God.' "

[Hebrews10:1-7MKJV].

5. '**Perfect Love' would need no rules.** From the above lessons we must deduce that:

- In the ideal world *Perfect love* would need no rules.

- Mankind (in the body of the *Children of Israel* who was chosen by God to become stewards of His Oracles and Commandments) was not capable of *perfect love.*

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- The *Law of Moses* (Torah) was given as a 'schoolmaster' to guide the 'pupil' (the Children of Israel representing mankind) in the *'rules of perfect love'* toward Christ, the *Author and Finisher of their faith:*

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."

[Galatians3:24-25KJV].

- Since the redeemed are no longer under the 'schoolmaster' (the Law of Moses) and have been shown the ideal way of *perfect love by the Author and Finisher of their faith,* the rules of the 'schoolmaster' have become unnecessary because what the 'pupil' was earlier trained to do under compulsion (the stern command of the 'schoolmaster' i.e. the 'Law of Moses') he now will anyway do spontaneously, voluntarily under the example, insistence and influence of Jesus Christ.

- When mankind was shown to be incapable of demonstrating and walking in *perfect love,* Jesus Christ came to die for the sins of the world and a race incapable of walking in and demonstrating *perfect love,* thus in so doing *demonstrating perfect love* on behalf of the race He had died for.

"And coming up one of the scribes heard them reasoning, knowing that He had answered them well, he asked Him, Which is the first

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commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first commandment.

"And the second is like this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.' And the scribe said to Him, Right, Teacher, according to truth You have spoken, that God is one, and there is no other besides Him. And to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love the neighbor as himself, is more than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices.

"And seeing that he had answered intelligently, Jesus said to him, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' And no one dared to question Him any more."

[Mark12:28-34MKJV].

"And being perfected, He [JESUS CHRIST] became the Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him ... looking to Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right of the throne of God."

[Hebrews 5:9; 12:2MKJV].

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

[Romans13:10MKJV].

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Chapter 62

STAINED GLASS: A HYMN TO ITS CREATOR

(God … the Father of Lights!)

1. **Let there be Light!** Without the Creator and the Light (the *Electromagnetic Spectrum of Light) spoken into existence in a single sentence* ('Uni' + 'verse') stained glass would not have been possible today, and without the inputs of the *Ultimate Scientist, Jesus Christ* who created the worlds and upholds all things (including the *Periodical Table of Elements, Acoustics, Acoustics, the Spectrum of Light, Universal Gravitation, the Strong & Weak Nuclear Forces and Laws of Physics* in general) by the word of His power, stained glass would not have been possible.

> *"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."*
>
> [Genesis1:3MKJV].
>
> *"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son [JESUS] whom he [the FATHER] hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he [the FATHER] made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his [the FATHER'S] glory, and the express image of his [the FATHER'S] person, and*

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> *upholding all things by the word of his [JESUS'] power, when he [JESUS] had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty [the FATHER] on high."*
>
> [Hebrews1:1-3MKJV].

2. **The Magic of Colour.** Without light we would not have had colour and hence no stained glass, so aptly demonstrated by the appearance of the rainbow after rain:

> *"I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth."*
>
> [Genesis9:13MKJV].

Without intelligent design and the intelligent designer (glass-art craftsman) plying his art (to design the pattern) and his craft (to engineer the assembling of the piece into a durable, coherent unit) the stained-glass process *(i.e., sketch > glass-cutting > painting > lead strips > glazing > cementing of assembly)* would not have been possible.

> *"And now I have sent a cunning man, endued with understanding, of Huram my father's, the son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father was a man of Tyre, skilful to work in gold, and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen, and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which shall be put to him, with thy cunning men, and with the cunning men of my lord David thy father."*
>
> [2Chronicles2:13-14KJV].

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"The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens ... the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding ... through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established ..."

[Proverbs3:19; 9:10; 24:3KJV].

"Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans."

[Daniel 1:4KJV].

3. **The Furnace.** Glass is made from sand, soda ash and limestone that are melted at very high temperature in a furnace to form glass that can be poured, blown, pressed, and moulded into a variety of shapes.

"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times."

[Psalm12:6KJV].

"The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts."

[Proverbs17:3KJV].

"Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."

[Isaiah48:10KJV].

4. **'The Eye of the Beholder'.** Beauty is, as they say, in *the eye of the beholder.* Do the math: Why would the Cosmos and the beauty of this majestic Universe have mattered had it not

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been for beings who could see, observe, admire, and enjoy it? Imagine the scenario where all this beauty of the physical Universe, not to mention the beauties of Heaven too, were created with no one with eyes and eyesight to look at it?

We can see light and discern colour because different wavelengths of light (e.g., through a glass prism) are slowed down by different degrees so that each colour has a different angle of refraction, thus enabling us to see all the colours contained in white light. The two types of photoreceptor cells of rods and cones (twenty times more rods than cones) housed in the retina at the back of our eye convert light into signals that are sent to the brain allowing us to see in *low light (rods)* and in *colour (cones).* The Bible describes the coming *Heavenly City (Zion)* as *'the perfection of beauty'.* The psalmist says:

> *"One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple."*
>
> [Psalm27:4KJV].
>
> *"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."*
>
> [Psalm50:2KJV].
>
> *"And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever."*
>
> [2Chronicles20:21KJV].

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PART SEVEN:

JUDGMENT

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Chapter 63

THE GREATEST EMBARRASSMENT EVER?

(Standing before the Great White Throne)

1. **Recalling the 'Beatitudes'.** Jesus Christ is remembered and loved for some of the greatest, if not indeed the greatest, teachings ever in the history of mankind. In fact, the literature comprising the Old & New Testaments of the Bible ('Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth') are considered by many today as the greatest literature ever penned over the millennia of the Bible's existence. As mentioned earlier (in *'The Greatest Sermon Ever Preached; New Testament'*) Jesus will be especially remembered for the Beatitudes ('Beautiful Attitudes'):

> *"Blessed are the poor in spirit! For theirs is the kingdom of Heaven."*
> *"Blessed are they that mourn! For they shall be comforted."*
> *"Blessed are the meek! For they shall inherit the earth."*
> *"Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness! For they shall be filled."*

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> *"Blessed are the merciful! For they shall obtain mercy."*
> *"Blessed are the pure in heart! For they shall see God."*
> *"Blessed are the peacemakers! For they shall be called the sons of God."*
> *"Blessed are they who have been persecuted for righteousness' sake! For theirs is the kingdom of Heaven."*
> *"Blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all kinds of evil against you falsely, for My sake."*
> [Matthew 5:3-11KJV].

2. **The greatest embarrassment?** Will the wilful rejection of Christ as Saviour one day, in Eternity before the *Great White Throne of Judgment,* for many prove the greatest embarrassment ever? Jesus Christ has said:

> *"And blessed is he, whoever shall not be offended in Me … For whoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My Words, the Son of Man shall be ashamed of him when He shall come in His own and in His Father's glory, and that of the holy angels."*
> [Matthew 11:6; Luke 9:26KJV].

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Chapter 64

THE HORROR OF UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

(Fact of Life: Sin and Crime make People Stupid)

1. **The 'Grand Plan' to catch Jesus Christ.** There was a time when the powers of darkness thought that they were nicely in control of things and had all their premeditated plans (to catch Jesus of Nazareth off-guard) intact. For instance:

1.1 **The Judas Goat betrays Jesus of Nazareth.** They had Jesus craftily singled out, identified, and arrested by the Roman soldiers treacherously headed by the 'Judas Goat', the traitor Judas Iscariot.

1.2 **Jesus in the Sanhedrin.** They had Jesus led to the Sanhedrin* by those soldiers headed where He was by heard and interrogated clandestinely by Caiaphas in the dark of night.

*Jewish Religious Council.

1.3 **Jesus heard by Pontius Pilate.** They had Jesus sent to Pontius Pilate (Roman governor of Palestine) to charge Jesus (in terms of

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Jewish Law) with the sin (‘crime’) of ‘blasphemy’.

1.4 **Jesus heard by Herod Antipas.** Pilate interrogates Jesus and sends Him to Herod Antipas (Jewish tetrarch and lackey of the Roman army of occupation) for an interview only for the mute and unresponsive Jesus to be ridiculed and mocked by Herod.

1.5 **Jesus sentenced by Pontius Pilate.** Herod sends Jesus back to Pontius Pilate for trial and sentencing in spite of his wife’s admonition not to have anything to do with ‘this righteous man’.

1.6 **Pontius Pilate sentences Jesus to death.** Pontius Pilate, Roman Governor of Judaea serving under Emperor Tiberius (from 26/27 B.C. to 36/37 D.A.) who admittedly himself could find ‘no fault’ in Jesus, sentences Jesus to death by way of crucifixion, the execution method of the day used by the Roman occupying army.

1.7 **Jesus is scourged, crowned, and crucified.** Jesus is forced to carry (what appears to have been) the crossbeam of His own cross to Golgotha, the place of execution after He was ‘crowned’ with a crown of thorns and brutally assaulted and scourged, i.e., the regulation 39 lashes with the Roman ‘Cat o’ Nine Tails’ whip and, incidentally, one lash for

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each of the 39 books of the Hebrew Bible (the Christian Old Testament).

1.8 **The Great Commission.** The risen Jesus eventually addresses His disciples shortly after His resurrection and says:

> *"All authority is given to Me in Heaven and in earth. Therefore go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things, whatever I commanded you. And, behold, I am with you all the days until the end of the world. Amen."*
>
> [Matthew 28:18b-20MKJV].

2. **The unintended consequences.** To this day the powers of darkness have never forgotten the insult of the resurrection and grave error of the execution of Jesus Christ; the last thing they intended was for Jesus Christ to rise from the grave, today known as the 'horror of unintended consequences'. The Apostle Paul writes:

> *"But, we speak wisdom among those who are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, that come to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, which God has hidden, predetermining it before the world for our glory; which none of the rulers of this world knew (for if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory)."*
>
> [1Corinthians2:6-8MKJV].

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If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory!

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Chapter 65

THE LAST ENEMY IS DEATH

(Death, where is thy sting?)

1. **Where did Death come from?** The Bible says:

> *"Therefore, even as through one man [ADAM] sin entered into the world, and death by sin ... But death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is the type of Him [JESUS] who was to come; For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all will be made alive. And so it is written, 'The first man, Adam, became a living soul,' the last Adam [JESUS] was a lifegiving Spirit."*
>
> [Romans5:12a,14; 1Corinthians15:22,45MKJV].

2. **Life expectancy for mankind.** The lifespan for mankind was fixed by the Bible at an average of *70 to 80 years:*

> *"The days of our years are three-score years and ten*; and if by strength they are fourscore years*, yet their pride is labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."*
>
> [Psalm90:10MKJV].

*'Score': 20.

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3. **The mortality rate for mankind.** Despite what many 'believe' about 'science' & scientists and 'evolution' & evolutionists, there is no *'Theory of Everything'* in the pipeline, neither some wonder cure for death. The mortality rate for the human species is, after 'millions of years of progressive evolution' *(sic)* still 100% for every generation for every nation (and thereafter God's judgment) and will remain so until Jesus Christ returns. The Bible says:

> *"And as it is appointed to men once to die, but after this the judgment."*
>
> [Hebrews9:27MKJV].

Besides, how anyone in his right mind would want to live forever on this sleazy blood, tear and sweat-drenched (and litter, rubbish, garbage, plastic & sewage strewn) planet (let alone live on Mars) boggles the mind. This is not my home; I'm just passing through. Jesus has promised:

> *"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world as a witness to all nations. And then the end shall come."*
>
> [Matthew24:14MKJV].

The Apostle Paul has warned:

> *"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."*
>
> [1Corinthians15:26KJV].

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4. **Hope for mankind.** In contrast to the atheists and evolutionists who 'believe' (*sic)* in Darwin and *DEATH-after-death,* Christians believe in Jesus Christ who preached *LIFE-after-death*. The Bible says:

> *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life … For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord … I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*
>
> [John3:16; Romans6:23; John11:25a; Revelation22:12-13KJV].

5. **Proof for the authenticity & veracity of the Bible as the Word of God.** As evangelical Christians we believe that the Bible can be trusted because:

5.1 The faith hero JOB has said so:

> *"Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were engraved in a book! Oh that they were cut with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever! For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall rise on the earth at the last; and even after they corrupt my skin, yet this: in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall*

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behold, and not a stranger's; though my heart be exhausted in my bosom."

[Job19:23-27MKJV].

5.2 The prophet DANIEL has said so:

"And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And those who are wise shall shine as the brightness of the sky; and those who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever."

[Daniel 12:2-3MKJV].

5.3 The disciple of Jesus MATTHEW has said so:

"And after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought them up into a high mountain apart. And He was transfigured before them. And His face shone as the sun, and His clothing was white as the light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah talking with Him."

[Matthew17:1-3MKJV].

5.4 The disciple MARK has said so:

"And after six days Jesus took Peter and James and John and led them up into a high mountain, apart by themselves. And He was transfigured before them. And His clothing became shining, exceedingly white as snow such as no fuller on earth could whiten them. And Elijah with Moses was seen by them, and they were talking with Jesus."

[Mark9:2-4MKJV].

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5.5 The disciple LUKE has said so:

"And about eight days after these sayings, He took Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray. And as He prayed, the appearance of His countenance was altered, and His clothing was dazzling white. And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of His exodus, which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem."

[Luke9:28-31MKJV].

5.6 The disciple JOHN (the 'beloved disciple') has said so:

"This is the disciple who testifies of these things and wrote these things. And we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many things, whatever Jesus did, which, if they should be written singly, I suppose the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen."

[John21:24-25MKJV].

"And I saw the dead, the small and the great, stand before God. And books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead in it. And death and hell delivered up the dead in them. And each one of them was judged according to their works."

[Revelation20:12-13MKJV].

5.7 The Apostle PAUL has said so:

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"But if Christ is proclaimed, that He was raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither has Christ been raised.

"And if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation is worthless, and your faith is also worthless. And we are also found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified of God that He raised Christ; whom He did not raise if the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ is not raised.

"And if Christ is not raised, your faith is foolish; you are yet in your sins. Then also those that fell asleep in Christ were lost. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

"But now Christ has risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruit of those who slept. For since death is through man, the resurrection of the dead also is through a Man. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all will be made alive."

[1Corintians15:12-22MKJV].

5.8 The resident UNDERTAKER from your nearest funeral parlour will affirm that the Bible does not lie and can be trusted (Be honest … do people die or not?). The Bible says:

"And as it is appointed to men once to die, but after this the judgment …"

[Hebrews9:27MKJV].

5.9 INSURANCE BROKERS and STATISTICIANS affirm the veracity of the Bible: The Bible says:

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> *"The days of our years are <u>three-score years and ten</u> [70]; and if by strength they are <u>fourscore years</u> [80], yet their pride is labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."*
>
> [Psalm90:10KJV/MKJV].

P.S. The abovementioned scripture dates from millenniums before the birth of Christ.

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Both *Worldometer.com* and *Wikipedia* report the life expectancies for men and women (2019-2020) as follows:

- MALE = 70.8 yrs.
- FEMALE = 75.6 yrs.

So, does what SCIENCE say square with what the BIBLE teaches or not?

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Chapter 66

IS THERE LIFE AFTER DEATH?

(“Truly, truly, I say to you, He who believes on Me has everlasting life.”)

[John6:47MKJV]

1. **Scientists and Life-After-Death.** When a famous scientist was asked the question, *“What happens to the human consciousness when it dies?”* his reply was that he did not believe in the *'fairy tales'* of the Bible and that, when a man dies, he is *‘shut off’* and *‘discarded’* the way in which the *'hard-drive of a computer'* is shut off and discarded, forever obliterated.

This statement, from such a formidable and respected scientist, came as quite a shock simply for the plain naiveté of it; if this was what one of the most revered scientists on earth believed about life in the Universe, then the future of science was in trouble indeed. Why on earth would God (according to his view) be so unwise as to put such a lowly, insignificant, inconsequential and dispensable piece of creation as 'man' in such a majestic creation as the Cosmos ... what for?

Man is hardly a computer or computer hard-drive, and what an insult to compare the mind of man with the inner technology of a computer! The gap between the mind of man and the CPU

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of a modern computer is so immense that it almost may be likened to the gap between the CPU of the computer and the inner flushing-mechanism in the cistern of a cistern toilet... there is simply no comparison. Someone has so aptly remarked:

“Computers are fast, accurate and stupid! Man is slow, sloppy and brilliant!”
(Author unknown).

Always bear in mind that it was man that invented computers, and not the other way around. Here is the deal: ‘Inventors' are bigger than their ‘inventions’ and ‘creators’ are bigger than their ‘creations’ (the ‘Universal Law of Creatorship’). Decide for yourself: Will a computer (even the most powerful of them) ever have invented/created Adam?

2. **On computers and hard drives.** Computers and computer hard drives do not happen by accident; behind such inventions there must have been a considerable amount of intelligence, technical skill, scientific and engineering expertise (and probably capital in the form of research grants plus marketing initiatives) and technological innovation based on ‘intelligent design’.

Someone must have first conceived, invented, installed, connected and switched on the computer with *a specific purpose in mind.* There must have been a *First Cause* (the 'inventor' or 'intelligent designer') at work; I have never seen

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a computer hard drive that had conceived, invented, designed, developed, manufactured, managed and maintained itself or without outside help.

In fact, having compared the soul or spirit of man with the hard-drive of a computer the famous scientist has, quite inadvertently, actually affirmed the historicity, authenticity and validity of the *Genesis Creation Account* by conceding the principle that computers and computer hard-drives do not fall out of the sky into warehouses and shops all over the world but are conceived, invented and created by experts in the field of the computer sciences ('intelligent designers').

3. **The fact of an Intelligently Designed Creation.** Robert Jastrow writes:

> *"Scientists have no evidence that life had any other origin save that of an act of Creation."*
> *['The Enchanted Loom: Mind in The Universe'.* p.19 – 1981].

4. **Life after Death.** Jesus Christ has promised:

> *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."*
>
> [John3:16-17].

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"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
[Romans6:23MKJV].

“And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”
[John11:26MKJV].

Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892) has reminded us:

“Death is not the end of living; it is the end of dying.”

Amen.

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INVITATION

"For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

[Romans6:23MKJV].

"I call Heaven and earth to record today against you. I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore, choose life, so that both you and your seed may live."

[Deuteronomy30:19MKJV].

RSVP

I herewith today accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour by accepting His invitation to repent and believe the Gospel.

Signed
Date

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"And after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God draws near. Repent, and believe the gospel."

[Mark1:15-16MKJV].

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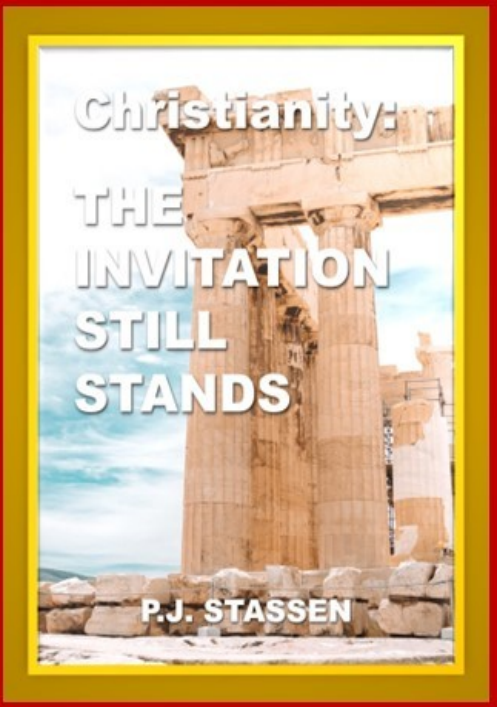
Author Profile

P. J. Stassen, born in 1947 in Randgate, South Africa, holds a B.A. degree in Industrial Psychology & Sociology (Industrial) from the University of South Africa. A former businessman who, after mandatory military conscription, spent the first 12 years of his life in 1966 in the field of retail (Textiles & General Dealer) in a family business begun by his father in 1964, thereafter worked at various other jobs eventually arriving in the fulfilling position of a corporate trainer with *Kumba Resources* (formerly *Iscor Iron Ore Mine*) in the Bushveldt region of South Africa during the years 1986 and 1997. At the time of his retirement in 2013 he was engaged in *Occupational Health & Safety Training* in the corporate environment on a contract basis for a Johannesburg company.

P.J. Stassen and his wife are both retired and live in Centurion, South Africa after having also served in their capacities as gospel musicians (pianist & organist respectively) in churches in places like Vanderbijlpark, Bloemfontein, Thabazimbi, Sinoville and Centurion.



Son of God, Son of David and Son of Man, He came to die for His own creation and for the sins of the world.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ; offered to all but forced on none.

Only one life that will soon be past; only what's done for this humble Carpenter-Rabbi from Nazareth will last.

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